



HOWEY

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Clay defeats Stiglich; Mayor King bolts Democrats

Treacherous journey for Dan Parker through 'cave of snakes'

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis

By 10 p.m. Tuesday, you could almost hear an audible sigh coming from the lips of Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker. "Maybe now I can concentrate on electing Democrats," Parker told HPR shortly after the Indiana Democratic Central Committee elected Lake County Commissioner Rudy Clay as its new chairman.

Since Parker took the reins of the chastened Indiana Democrats after the party lost the governorship, the House and speaker, and another Congressional seat, he has faced an almost unprecedented set of circumstances. With the governor gone, lost is the fundraising engine that Govs. Evan Bayh, Frank O'Bannon and Joe Kernan used to fill party coffers. On Tuesday, Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels got a bill that will rub salt in that wound -- ending the personal license plate funding to the two major political parties.



Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker found himself dealing with unprecedented - even bizarre - party politics and possibly emerged with a more diversified party. (HPR Photo)

When the Indiana General Assembly convened in January, the party found House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer as its spokesman by default. And that was filled with controversy, highlighted by the March walkout that gutted 130 bills and prompted Gov. Mitch Daniels to compare the South Bend Democrat to a "car bomber." Within hours, Bauer had retreated to a hospital where part of his colon was removed, leaving behind Democrats like State Rep. Russ Stilwell to define the party.

Just as Bauer fomented House recalcitrance and then disappeared, the county party reorganizations took place on March 5 and that left Parker with even greater challenges, particularly in the party's most critical cell of Lake County. There, Democratic Chairman Stephen Stiglich failed to muster a quorum. Even though he



"Enough is enough. At some point, politics as usual has to end, and that's exactly why I think I was elected."

— State Rep. Billy Bright, R-North Vernon

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easily defeated a challenge by State Rep. John Aguilera, Parker stepped in and voided the election.

That posed a huge challenge. Would the Indiana Democratic Central Committee impose a chairman on the feuding Lake Democrats? While some saw it as an opportunity to end the East Chicago domination of the chair since 1957, U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky quickly endorsed Stiglich instead of a reformer such as former District Attorney Jon DeGuilio.

Parker reacted by returning the party to former rules, giving the Lake County Democrats a second chance to elect a chair. But in early April, Stiglich again failed to muster a quorum, once again returning the question to the state Central Committee. It came after people such as Clay and County Surveyor George Van Til along with more than 100 other precinct officials from places such as Highland and Gary failed to show for the second caucus.

If Lake County wasn't challenge enough, there were other county elections without quorums in Starke and Union counties, and a row in the 6th CD where Delaware County Democrats appealed the election of Chairman Tim Southworth and Vice Chair Melina Fox.

Add to that feuds that had broken out between city councils and mayors in places such as New Albany and South Bend, and Councilor Steve Talley's successful coup d'etat against Rozelle Boyd in Indianapolis, and it was as if prairie fires were breaking out all over the Hoosier Democratic ranch.

"I was roundly criticized for simply following the rules," Parker said.

Complicating the Lake County situation was the March 19 Indiana Democratic Central Committee reorganization that ended up with a 9-9 tie between Vice Chair Cordelia Lewis Burks and Hobart Mayor Linda Buzinec. After securing his own office, Parker was faced with a tie-breaker. Those in attendance said Parker left the room to consult the braintrust of his patron, U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh, then returned to break the tie for Burks. But not before U.S. Rep. Julia Carson and the Indiana Legislative Black Caucus had showed up to support Burks.

Some suggested Parker (and Bayh) were behind the challenge to Burks, something he vehemently denies. "I voted for her to break the tie," Parker said on March 23, trying to tamp down any notion that he was leading a party that failed to recognize its critical diversity.

In totality, Parker was being challenged on multiple fronts. He had just turned 35 years old earlier in the week, the age a person can run for president. That might be an easier job that chairing the Indiana Democrats in 2005.

On Wednesday night at Barnes & Thornburg, Parker

presided over what he called the election of the first African-American Lake County chair in Indiana history with the ascension of Commissioner Clay (in March, Tippecanoe County Democrats elected the first black county chair, Perry Brown).

Wading through a cave of snakes

But getting there was akin to Indiana Jones wading through a cave of snakes. For instance, late last week the six



Chairman Clay

Democratic mayors of Lake County joined Visclosky in endorsing Stiglich. But that came after Gary Mayor Scott King made his own play for the job before realizing it was futile. Then at the 11th hour, King tried another power play, reportedly calling up Democratic National Committeeman Robert

A. Pastrick and asking him to nominate him.

Pastrick refused, and in a final payback to his old rival Stiglich, ended up nomination Clay ... a classic brokering a deal from the political grave.

On Wednesday, the key dynamic for the elevation of Clay came from the Legislative Black Caucus, led by State Rep. Charlie Brown of Gary. But the nominating speech for Clay came from Pastrick, the former East Chicago mayor. Another key supporter was Lake County Sheriff Roy Dominguez. The idea that Pastrick and Dominguez were on the same page after the dramatic events of 2003 and 2004 when their relationship crumbled in spectacular fashion was in and of itself a peculiar and riveting development.

"I just feel that Lake County could be better served," Pastrick told the *Post-Tribune* while fending off questions as to whether he played a role in Stiglich's failure to reach a quorum. "It's time we recognize that the African-



Democratic National Committeeman Robert A. Pastrick helped broker the deal for Clay from the political grave. (Indianapolis Eye Photo by Ellen Jackson)

American community has provided the tremendous plurality the state Democratic party has enjoyed in elections, and it's finally time to recognize that in the leadership."

Clay was quoted in the *Post-Tribune* saying, "I don't know how to feel. I'll just have to feel my way through for a while. I know I have to mend some fences, reach out and touch base with people. We can do more to form bridges and build unity and involve more people in the party, especially young Democrats."



Clay a transitional figure; King bolts Democrats

The 69-year-old Clay is seen as a transitional figure, though sources tell HPR he is in good health. He is a nemesis of Gary Mayor Scott King, who announced Wednesday afternoon on WJOB-AM in Hammond that he was leaving the Democratic Party. "I'm disgusted with it," King said as he left City Hall on Wednesday morning (*Post-Tribune*). "I'm embarrassed by it. It's not good government or good politics." In a statement released by his office, King said, "I have tendered my resignation as Deputy Chairman of the Indiana State Democratic Party and further disassociated myself from the party by declaring myself an independent."



Gary Mayor Scott King tried too early, then too late and ended up bolting the party. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)

Parker issued a statement in return, saying, "While Mayor King may be leaving the Democratic Party, I can assure you that the Democratic Party is not leaving the City of Gary. Our party will continue to represent the people of Gary, and to continue to make Gary a great place to live and raise a family."

Clay has clashed with other party leaders in the past, notably former Gary Mayor Richard G. Hatcher, but has a penchant for regrouping and realigning himself. On Tuesday afternoon, Hatcher voiced his support for Clay. So did Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard, House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer and Marion County Democratic Chairman Ed Treacy, all with considerable clout on the Indiana Democratic Central Committee.

One informed and reliable Democratic source observed, "Rudy Clay made his move at the perfect time. Scott King tried too early and then too late."

Exit the East Chicago war horses

The irony there is that within four months of each other the two East Chicago political titans for the past generation, Pastrick and Stiglich, have been dethroned. The two served as mayor and sheriff. Stiglich succeeded Pastrick as chair in 2001 after the brutal 1999 Democratic mayoral primary that spawned the movie "*King of Steeltown*" and, subsequently a slew of indictments and convictions that have rocked the Lake County Democratic establishment.

"Stiglich could have saved himself if he had just reached out to people," one Lake County source told HPR. "But he didn't. His style was always threats and intimidation."

If Stiglich was the big loser by failing to win what should have been an easy re-election in two county caucus-

es, and then a state Central Committee vote, he wasn't the only one. Another is Mayor King, who without his long-time political ally Jewell Harris working behind the scenes, ended up displaying poor strategic skills.

Another is U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, who inserted himself in this local drama, but couldn't save Stiglich. That is an embarrassment coming at a time when Visclosky is trying to rally Lake County communities with his "Good Government Initiative."

Yet another is former Lake County Sheriff John Buncich, who backed Stiglich. He will try and unseat Sheriff Dominguez in 2006, but the events of the past month could hurt those efforts.

In addition to Clay, the other compelling figure in this drama is Rep. Aguilera. Even though he lost the March 5 caucus decisively and

then was left behind on the state Central Committee vote, had he not gathered the challenge, Stiglich would have prevailed. By Tuesday, he had dropped out of the race for chair, but is signalling his intent to run against Stiglich for Lake County auditor in 2006.

How all of this impacts East Chicago Mayor George Pabey, who backed Stiglich, remains to be seen.

Parker, Clay and diversity

But the guy who emerges in far better shape than where he was a month ago is Chairman Dan Parker.

Parker was giving Clay much credit. "Rudy ran a pretty good campaign," Parker said. "We heard from a number of committee members that he was the only one to ask for their support. He was able to get the support of county, city and township elected officials and very broad support from the Lake County legislative delegation."

In announcing the 13-8 victory and Clay as the first African-American Democratic Lake County chairman, Parker was able to preside over a victory of diversity, though the fact that it is 2005 for something like that to happen within the Hoosier Democratic family is stunning.

"Now is the time for healing," Parker told HPR. "Now is the time to move on and mend fences for the party in Lake County."

And, Parker said, with Lake County "out of the way, now I can focus on the legislature." It is a place where Republicans are preparing to pass tax increases, and in Parker's mind, it is time to prime the prospects for 2006. ❖



(Blink) It's time (Blink-Blink) for the legislative (Blink) end (Blink) game (Blink-Blink-Blink)

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - Let's talk about young, freshman State Rep. Billy Bright. Government is too big, he said, and will not support tax hikes.

Not even sin tax hikes.

Billy Bright told the *Louisville Courier-Journal* last weekend, "Government is too big, it spends too much, and at some point, it's time to say: 'Enough is enough.' At some point, politics as usual has to end, and that's exactly why I think I was elected."

Now, let's analyze that quote for a minute. Billy Bright is wrong, because what is occurring at the Statehouse and within the Senate and House Republican caucuses is not "politics as usual."

Billy, there hasn't been any kind of general tax increase since 1987. In 1993, when Senate Republicans thought about cigarette and hospital taxes (a good notion if you have free health care for life), Indiana Republican Chairman Alan B. Hubbard made a mad dash from his perch above Hooters to the Statehouse to put a stop to such nonsense. In 1995, Gov. Evan Bayh and House Republicans gleefully announced they had slashed excise taxes. In 1997, there was a boost in workers comp in exchange for a coupla stadiums. And in 2000, Gov. Frank O'Bannon suspended the gas tax for a couple of months and dispersed billions of dollars of surplus money into highways.

What is going on at the Statehouse is politics of the unusual.

So unusual, that from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 13, the House Republicans had a come to Jesus ... er, come to Brian

and Jeff ... caucus. Moderates were worried about voting for tax hikes. Some thought it was a mistake to take slots and cherry masters off the table. Freshmen like Billy Bright were worried about what Throw-Back-Politician B. Patrick Bauer would do in 2006 with their looming votes.

Reps. Billy Bright, Bruce Borders, Troy Woodruff, Bill Davis, Jackie Walorski (who had conniption fits about voting for DST) are soon to be asked to vote for tax hikes. There's an entire generation of House members who haven't been asked to do that ... ever.

Rep. Troy Woodruff, R-Vincennes, rationalized some tax hikes, telling the *Courier-Journal* that marrying specific tax increases with specific spending could help him vote for a tax increase, despite his opposition to higher taxes during his campaign. He will oppose general tax increases that are used

to grow general government spending, which he called a "shotgun" approach. Presumably this means Gov. Mitch Daniels' one-year, 1 percent tax on wealthier families. Woodruff said dedicating the revenue to a specific cause -- education or Medicaid -- is different. "That's something people can understand. That's compassionate," Woodruff said. "People know we're broke."

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jeff Espich, R-Uniondale, said later, "We're going to have to have new revenue" (*Louisville Courier-Journal*). "it's the right thing to do. I believe it's the right thing to increase K-12 (school) spending, and I believe it's right to fund health care for the poor at an amount that more closely approaches the need."

But State Rep. Eric Turner explained, "I came to this session thinking we did not have a revenue problem. We have a spending problem. Nothing has changed. I am reluctant to agree to increased taxation."

Just these three votes from Billy Bright, Troy Woodruff and Eric Turner would be enough to torpedo the Senate plan.

So Republicans will be looking for Democrats, particularly in Northwest Indiana. The *Times of Northwest Indiana*



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reported this morning, "Republican leaders tightened the screws on Northwest Indiana Democrats Wednesday to support GOP budget plans by saying it's the only chance for the region to move forward with a tax cap and transit projects. But several region Democrats said they would bail out on the proposed Regional Development Authority plan if it meant voting for a budget that would slash significant money from their school districts and increases property taxes.

"This is the single best opportunity for Northwest Indiana transit plans in years," Garton said (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). "If it doesn't happen this year, I doubt it will come up again for several years." Rep. Bob Kuzman, D-Crown Point, observed, "Since they cannot sell their own people on the worth of shortchanging education and raising property taxes, Republicans will resort to any tactic possible to try and gain Democratic support," Kuzman said.

Tax shift on life support

State Sen. Luke Kenley proposed a local option income tax that would shift the source of local government growth away from property taxes. Kenley said the idea was on "life support" after meeting with local mayors and county officials, but he wanted to offer them a way to replace their loss even if it may be too complicated to swallow this year.

DST on life support; Crooks removed

As this report was being written, it appears that House Speaker Brian Bosma was preparing to yank State Rep. Dave Crooks off the conference committee, replacing him with Fort Wayne Republican Rep. Randy Borrer.

On Wednesday State Sen. Marvin Riegsecker was clearly peeved, saying, "The time has come to make a decision, and we have to make it. It's going to ruin our session, and I'm not going to be a part of that. I want action." If the log jam wasn't cleared this morning, Riegsecker said, "Then I will inform the governor that I am finished carrying this bill. It will be gone after tomorrow as far as I'm concerned. I've given it my all."

Senate President Robert Garton is signalling that DST may have the votes to pass his chamber.

Governor Corleone hits the airwaves

A couple of months ago we predicted Gov. Mitch "Don Corleone" Daniels would try and apply heat via the airwaves by making Hoosiers an offer they can't refuse. It's now happening on WIBC. "We're out to deliver an honestly balanced state budget, the first one in years," Daniels explains. "We can't do this and keep everyone completely happy. But saying yes to everybody is how the state went broke in the first place. One thing I learned fast in this job: Absolutely everyone has a lobbyist in Indianapolis except the taxpayer. That's where you and I come in. Encourage those who represent you to help us do our duty by passing an honestly balanced budget this year."

Special session outlook:

HPR puts chances for a special session at 75 per cent. ❖

Pence not endangered by DeLay fallout

But loquacious congressman reticent to talk

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON--House Majority Leader Tom DeLay's radioactivity will have to rise much higher on the political Geiger counter to endanger Rep. Mike Pence. DeLay has become a lightning rod because of allegations that he took foreign trips improperly financed by lobbyists, received illegal corporate contributions to a Texas political committee, and put family members on his campaign payroll. He denies any wrongdoing and blames partisan politics for his

troubles.

The House Ethics Committee has agreed to begin an investigation, and some Republicans have called for DeLay either to resign or step aside while the controversy swirls.

Pence, chairman of the Republican Study Committee, a group of about 100 conservative House members, is in a position to pick up some radiation from the DeLay fallout. After a quick ascent up the House leadership ladder, the three-term congressman owes a lot to DeLay. Democrats have indicated that they intend to make DeLay an issue in the 2006 elections.



6th CD Democratic Disarray

But the national attention being paid to DeLay may not translate into trouble for Pence. "It's not nearly bad enough to have negative repercussions for any Republican in



Indiana," said Andy Downs, director of the Mike Downs Center for Indiana Politics at Indiana University-Purdue University at Ft. Wayne.

In his district, Pence benefits from the internecine leadership warfare among 6th CD Democrats. Chairman Tim Southworth survived an overthrow attempt in mid-March. But the vice chair position is open because Melina Fox, who took on Pence in 2002 and 2004, has indicated that she is moving out of the district. Fox could not be reached for comment.

"This is one of Mike's best advantages -- a Democratic Party that's in disarray in the district," said Ray Scheele, a professor of political science at Ball State University and former district chairman. "It appears Democratic leaders are wasting a lot of time fighting over a vice chair."

It's not that Pence needs much help. He has \$213,939 cash on hand, according to the latest Federal Election Commission filing, and represents a district that was redrawn in 2000 to add more conservative areas in southeast and northeast Indiana. "It's way too premature to say Mike Pence is in any real trouble because of the configuration of the district and his advantage of incumbency," said Scheele.

But people are growing weary of Washington politics, Scheele said. He cites the Terri Schiavo case, a recent proposal to require passports for Americans to re-enter the United States from Canada and Mexico, and the DeLay controversy as having diverted attention from voter concerns like rising gas prices. "They're mentioning things they're hearing in the news, things...that to people on the street seems absurd," said Scheele. "'06 is beginning to look like a rising tide of anti-incumbency."

Pence Reticent about DeLay

Although an anti-incumbency movement may not be an immediate political danger for Pence, he is unusually reticent to talk to about DeLay. Pence, a former radio talk show host, has forged a reputation for being one of the most accessible House members. His rise up the leadership ladder has been fueled in part by his deft handling of the media.

But Pence's spokesman rebuffed several HPR requests since April 12 for a brief interview with Pence about

DeLay. "[T]he congressman supports Tom DeLay," said Matt Lloyd, Pence's press secretary, in one e-mail exchange. "He's probably not (going to) tell you much more about DeLay than I just did."

Lloyd provided articles from two conservative publications that quoted Pence asserting that House conservatives staunchly back DeLay. He also noted that Pence spoke about DeLay on C-Span Washington Journal on April 20. "Some issues he has more to say on that others," Lloyd said. "For DeLay, he supports the majority leader and is grateful for his leadership sums it up pretty well."

Still, it is unusual for Pence not to make himself available to Indiana media on any issue. During the same time that HPR had submitted its DeLay interview requests, Pence's office issued a statement saying that he was willing to talk about two reporters who lost a court appeal to protect their sources. Pence is author of legislation that would make it

harder for federal authorities to subpoena reporters. "Congressman Mike Pence is sponsoring a media shield bill and is available to comment. Please contact me if you're interested in talking to him," Lloyd said in an April 19 advisory. Pence's April 20 C-Span appearance focused on a campaign finance reform measure that he wrote.

Hoosiers Tend to Embrace Their Own

Even though Pence isn't eager to talk about DeLay, he and his Hoosier House colleagues probably aren't endangered by the imbroglio. Not only does DeLay have low name ID in the state, voters tend to embrace their own representatives while avoiding guilt by association.

"We've always been an isolated state," said Downs. "We look at ourselves more than the outside world. We have a tendency for folks to have met their elected officials and know them and trust them personally." This relationship gives politicians some breathing room. "Their congressional representative is okay, apparently it's the other 434 that are bad."

Another factor working in Pence's favor is his fervent belief in small government. "When a candidate runs on a platform of minimalist government, that can forgive other sins," said Downs. ❖



U.S. Rep. Mike Pence has been uncharacteristically quiet on the fortunes of embattled House Majority Leader Tom DeLay. (HPR Photo)



Terry Holt sizes up Evan Bayh's '08 odds

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - Terry Holt is now an Evan Bayh watcher.

Holt was spokesman for the Bush-Cheney campaign in 2004. He's run Indiana congressional campaigns for John Hiler, Mike Pence and Chris Chocola. He had a big role in U.S. Rep. George Nethercutt's 1994 upset of House Speaker Tom Foley. He was on Dick Lugar's 1996 presidential campaign. He has worked for such high-ranking House Republicans as Dick Armey and John Boehner.



In essence, he's been there; done that. At the highest levels of American politics.

Now, in addition to his job with Quinn Gillespie & Associates (Gillespie as in Republican National Chairman Gillespie), he's got a two-day-a-week gig on CNN's *Crossfire*, the show *Comedy Central's* Jon Stewart purportedly ran off the air after he complained about people screaming at each other. At least Stewart solved the Tucker Carlson problem.

But then there's Terry Holt, who was Bayh-watching on the Rob Portman issue.

"This is weird," he said of Bayh's decision to hold up the Portman nomination as President Bush's top trade negotiator. "Evan Bayh needs to be running to the center, not the left."

Holt explained, "Hillary is the de facto nominee. Everyone and everything is relative to Hillary."

And this past week, U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton reported an \$8 million war chest.

"Eight million," Holt said. "That should tell the rest of the Democratic field to get off their heels."

The conventional wisdom is that Hillary Clinton has got the Democratic presidential nomination sewed up. Dick Morris believes that. Holt won't go that far, but he is right about one aspect: Whatever Hillary does, says or raises, it will impact every other candidate in the field.

The problem with conventional wisdom is that it is so often turned on its ear.

If you believed in conventional wisdom, it would have been another Bush-Quayle triumph in 1992. There never would have been a President Clinton. It would be Gov. Stephen Goldsmith in 1996.

In Holt's view, Bayh would be better off to cultivate his moderately-conservative credentials in the heartland as opposed to lurching toward the left to try and out-Hillary Sen. Clinton.

The problem there is that may not win Sen. Bayh many primaries, unless he can make the compelling case that is on almost every Democrat's mind: that another Northeastern liberal at the top of the ticket will almost certainly (CW?) result in a third consecutive Republican presidency.

Bayh's left of center stance on the Portman nomination has caught the attention of folks in the heartland. The *Cleveland Plain-Dealer* in crucial Ohio posted this editorial on Wednesday:

"Sen. Evan Bayh, the Indiana Democrat with a slightly surprising record as a free trader, insists he has nothing personal or professional against Rob Portman. In fact, Bayh avers, the Cincinnati-area congressman who is President George W. Bush's nominee to be the nation's top trade negotiator probably will get his vote -- after he holds his nomination hostage for a while.

"Bayh announced last week that he had placed a hold on consideration of Portman's nomination because the Senate's Republican leadership will not allow a vote on a bipartisan measure aimed at tightening trade rules with China. Although Bayh's frustration is understandable, he may be acting against the one appointee who could be most helpful in getting that lopsided trade relationship more in balance."

The *Plain-Dealer* continued, explaining, "Here's the problem: The day Bayh announced his hold, the government announced the U.S. trade deficit for February was a record \$61 billion -- much of that coming from Chinese textile imports for which tariff restrictions were lifted Jan. 1. It's part of a \$162 billion trade deficit with China, exacerbated by that nation's pegging its currency to the dollar to keep its manufactured goods cheaply attractive, and making little apparent effort to rein in the brazen theft of U.S. intellectual property rights by knockoff artists. In short, China is taking the United States to the cleaners through its unfair trade practices."

The *Plain-Dealer* editorial concluded, "So Bayh -- who, it cannot be ignored, is said to harbor presidential ambitions for 2008 and could use some 'fair' trade to balance his 'free' trade history -- has put down his own marker to force the administration's hand. But it is just such trade difficulties that Portman, with his established record of eliciting bipartisan cooperation in Congress, is expected to tackle. So, rather than giving the administration the scalpel it seeks to operate on the China problem, Bayh is keeping the operating theater closed. And that will accomplish little, other than costing Americans more dollars and jobs." ❖



Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* - Perchance you have seen news accounts about sleazy attacks by a political group with a patriotic sounding name, USA Next, that savage the AARP, the long-respected organization that looks out for interests of folks over 50. An Internet ad in this "patriotic" effort suggests that the AARP advocates gay marriage and hates our soldiers. This, of course, is untrue. But what does that matter in slash-and-burn politics today? It's all part of the campaign led by a man named Charles Jarvis, who is chairman of both USA Next and United Seniors, a group formed to challenge the AARP among senior citizens. Why the sleaze campaign? Because the AARP disagrees with President Bush's proposal to change Social Security by putting emphasis on private retirement accounts. ❖

Rich James, *Post-Tribune* - The Lake County Democratic Precinct Organization sold its soul last Saturday. Instead of standing proud, half of the precinct committeemen and their vices kowtowed to those who use the party for personal gain — which is contrary to the party's basic tenet. Those who boycotted the county chairman's election at the behest of vindictive, power-driven people — such as East Chicago's Tom Cappas — surrendered the one thing they hold most dearly — a vote. And when someone treats a vote like that, it doesn't say much about their integrity. It's like wiping your feet on democracy. ❖

Amos Brown, *Indianapolis Recorder* - Has the *Indianapolis Star* spiked its only column written by a local African-American journalist? For more than a month, James Patterson, the 16-year veteran *Star* reporter, editorial writer and columnist, hasn't written his regular Saturday column. For some 30 years, the *Indianapolis News* and the *Star* regularly published a column by an Indianapolis African-American journalist. The disappearance of Patterson's decade-old column breaks that tradition. A competent, award winning journalist, Patterson gave voice to viewpoints and opinions the *Star* now seems bent on suppressing. Top *Star* editors will hide behind the skirts of "personnel matters" in not explaining Patterson's journalistic disappearance. Meanwhile, sources have told The Recorder that some top *Star* editors are trying to run Patterson away from the newspaper. Indianapolis Recorder columnists shouldn't be the only African-American columnists in any Indianapolis newspaper or magazine. Our community and our city deserve the return of James Patterson's distinctive, outspoken voice. When the African-American journalist with the second longest tenure at Indianapolis' largest media organization mysteriously vanishes, America's 16th largest

African-American community is owed an explanation — and soon. ❖

Gary Gerard, *Warsaw Times-Union* - Warsaw (and Kosciusko County by association) have been very fortunate to achieve the status of orthopedic capital of the world. Let's be honest. Those industries drive the local economy. And those industries are fairly recession-proof. If someone needs a new joint implanted, they don't put it off. They don't shop around. They just get it done because they're not paying for it, the insurance company is. I think sometimes because we have this very brisk and vibrant orthopedic thing happening here, economic development isn't always on our front burner. But it really should be, because economic development is on the front burner in every surrounding county. Fulton County is courting an ethanol plant. Whitley County snagged SDI. Marshall County's Plymouth Industrial Development Corp. has been cooking along for decades. North Manchester and Wabash County economic development groups run advertisements in this newspaper attempting to convince businesses to locate in their area. One ad says, "The North Manchester Industrial Complex is located just a few miles south of Kosciusko County near the intersection of State Roads 13 and 114. Chances are, many of our employees are already commuting from North Manchester. ... We welcome the opportunity to provide your new business location. Local incentives include low-cost or no-cost land, tax abatement, training grants and revolving loan funds." The ad also points out all the great reasons why the Wabash County community is a great place for manufacturing. See, Wabash County, with a population around 35,000, budgeted \$400,000 for economic development in 2003. Our county, with a population of 74,000, budgeted \$68,000. ❖

Pete Ciancone, *Terre Haute Tribune-Star* - You have to hand it to Terre Haute Mayor Kevin Burke for knowing how to ice the crowd. Friday, after Gov. Mitch Daniels had been at work about 45 minutes in City Hall with a town hall meeting, Burke brought festivities to an end without one murmur of protest from the audience. You folks out there who want a tip on crowd control: listen up. Burke walked out in front of the crowd holding his 4-week-old granddaughter, who was beginning to awaken from her nap. Daniels played along nicely, claiming an ability to easily put her back to sleep, then took her onto his shoulder. Burke said the necessary good-byes while Daniels, good on his word, put the pink-clad sleeper back to dreamland. She awoke only briefly when the applause started. ❖



Rep. Adams expected to miss rest of session

INDIANAPOLIS - Democratic legislative sources tell HPR that State Rep. Tiny Adams, D-Muncie, will likely miss the rest of the session due to a stroke he suffered earlier this month.

Lake County legislators disgusted with Mayor King

GARY - Gary state Rep. Charles Brown, a longtime critic of Gary Mayor Scott King who lobbied hard for Clay, was far less charitable. With only eight days left in the spring legislative session, Brown said the mayor's move could jeopardize a fragile coalition of lawmakers needed to fund a multimillion-dollar transportation package, property-tax relief and other proposals. "This is a bombshell he's dropped," Brown said. "I'm totally disgusted. I totally disenfranchise myself from anything associated with Scott King." King had discussed taking over the county chairmanship after Stiglich twice failed to get enough precinct committeemen to hold a valid election against state Rep. John Aguilera, D-East Chicago. As support for Stiglich frayed in the days leading up to the special election, King again tried to rally support. Hours before Tuesday's vote, King reportedly asked former East Chicago mayor and Central Committee member Robert A. Pastrick to back him. Pastrick, who would nominate Clay for the post, declined. Aguilera said he was surprised by King's defection from the party. "The day after the (the special election) occurs, to say that this was something that he had been planning over the years seems a little disingenuous to me," Aguilera said. "He had all the time to get involved to change the



party. I know for a fact that 48 hours ago he was campaigning for the job. "I just don't understand it."

Earlham student charged for throwing pie at Kristol

RICHMOND - Misdemeanor charges have been filed against an Earlham College student who last month threw a pie at William Kristol who was delivering an address on U.S. policy post-911 (*Richmond Palladium-Item*). Josh Medlin is charged with battery, a class B misdemeanor, according to the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office. The charges were filed Tuesday in Wayne Superior Court III. Medlin previously stated he threw the pie to protest what he said was superficial dialogue with no real chance for debate.

Souder advocates new 'Schiavo' guidelines

WASHINGTON - Feeding tubes should not be removed from incapacitated people whose medical costs are partly paid by the federal government and who haven't provided explicit instructions to withdraw food and water, members of Congress were told Tuesday. Rep. Mark Souder, R-3rd, chaired the hearing called as a result of the end-of-life struggle over Terri Schiavo, the Florida woman who died last month after her feeding tube was removed under court order. Schiavo did not have written instructions about being kept alive; her husband and parents disagreed about her wishes. "At a minimum," Souder said, "our federal programs should protect patients rather than pave the way to hasten their death, but we do not have a federal presumption where a person's wishes are unknown and unknowable. This creates a vacuum where someone else may determine that a patient's life is one not worth living, and this is most definitely a slippery slope."

Census says Indiana will lag behind Sunbelt states

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana will continue to lose population ground -- and possibly congressional influence -- over the next 25 years as national population trends continue to favor the Sunbelt states, Census Bureau data reveals (*Indianapolis Star*). Florida, California and Texas will account for about half of total population growth from 2000 to 2030, the Census Bureau said. Indiana will slip from the 14th most populous state to No. 18 as it is overtaken by Tennessee, Maryland, Arizona and Washington. Indiana had a population of 6,080,485 in 2000. The number in 2030 is forecast to be 6,810,108.

Benefiel executed

MICHIGAN CITY - Bill Benefiel Jr., 48, died of chemical injection at 12:35 a.m. Thursday at the Indiana State Prison. He was convicted of holding 18-year-old Delores Wells of Terre Haute captive for 12 days before killing her on Feb. 17, 1987, and spent nearly two decades on death row. "Let's get this over with. Let's do it," Benefiel said.

Cities brace for blown gasoline budgets

NOBLESVILLE - The sting many feel as they gas up their vehicles is also hitting them a second time, as police, fire and government officials' fuel budgets are becoming strained over high prices at the pump (*Noblesville Daily Times*). So far, the city of Noblesville has kept its head above water with the 2005 fuel budget, but administrative officer Rusty Bodenhorn said if prices remain high it could cause some big problems. "Right now we're not in dire shape for funding, but by September or October we will start to feel this crunch because of the increase in gasoline prices," he explained. ❖