



Schellinger declares; JLT leans in

A crowded primary develops in a 'neutral' Democratic Party

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Almost 40 miles north of Greensburg where Gov. Mitch Daniels was shoveling open a new Honda plant, Democrat Jim Schellinger stood outside the Indiana Secretary of State's office and declared his candidacy for governor.

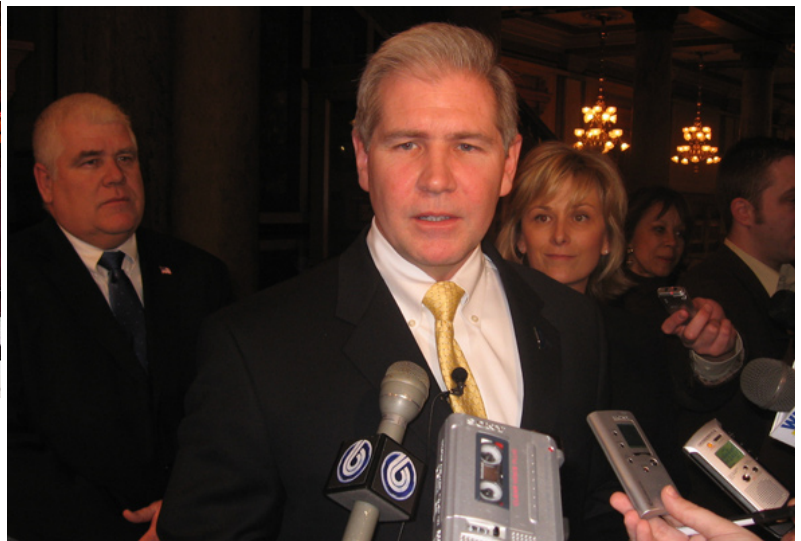
"I've given this a lot of thought and I'd like to think this is a 46-year calling. I believe that in Indiana, we can do better," Schellinger said. "I believe citizens of Indiana deserve good leadership and I believe that I am prepared to do that."

Along with his announcement came the news of three campaign co-chairs: Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, U.S. Rep. Julia Carson and former House Speaker John Gregg - an impressive list.

While Indiana Democrats were officially proclaiming "neutrality" in the governor's race, Democratic blogs and pickle barrel conversations were whispering that this was anything but a "may the best man win" scenario.



Schellinger (right) and Thompson



Indiana Democratic executive Director Mike Edmondson had purchased "JimSchellinger.com" for the candidate while Chairman Dan Parker was publicly hoping that the party would "coalesce" around one candidate.

And then there was former Congresswoman Jill Long Thompson, who wasn't heeding the orchestrated game plan. "I'm very encouraged in running for governor," she said. "I continue to have people in our party urging me to run. I have very strong support. If I do decide - and I'm leaning in that direction

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A 'Schell' of a party

By **RYAN NEES**

KOKOMO - Weeks before Jim Schellinger's name was even floated by media outlets as a potential gubernatorial candidate, the Indiana Democratic Party had already begun scrambling to assemble his campaign.



On January 30, they purchased the JimSchellinger.com domain name. Two weeks later, the party sent out an e-mail promoting the yet-to-be-candidate candidate, and two weeks after that, they issued a press release defending him against charges in the **Post-Tribune** about a botched jail project. Though



"The 'stay-the-course' strategy in Iraq has failed. It is time to stop the open-ended commitment."

- **U.S. Rep. Baron Hill**



HOWEY *Political Report*

Schellinger hadn't declared his candidacy, the subtitle of the release read, "Newspaper wrongly links candidate, jail project."

Schellinger's never held any political office, nor run for office in the past. He's really somewhat of a waif, and if you set aside his service on the Indianapolis Capital Improvement Board, the only reason he's politically well-connected at all is because of his deep pockets -- he's given over \$30,000 in the last two years to Joe Donnelly, Brad Ellsworth, Baron Hill, Evan Bayh, and Julia Carson combined. He's also one of Bart Peterson's biggest donors.

Perplexingly, though without question, Schellinger's emerged as the establishment's candidate. Despite having spent four years trashing Mitch Daniels as a corporate plutocrat -- one press release was titled "Greed is not a moral value" -- the Indiana Democratic Party is prepared to nominate a candidate whose primary allure is his ability to raise money, if not outright self-fund.

Schellinger might turn out to be a fine candidate, but it is already clear that he's not the second coming of Brad Ellsworth. After the 2006 election, Ann DeLaney on **Indiana Week in Review** said that she was "embarrassed" to admit that she didn't know who ran the Ellsworth campaign despite identifying it as the best run. Consensus among Democrats is now that the congressional victories of Donnelly, Hill, and Ellsworth, should be credited less to the party and vastly more to the individual campaigns. The party didn't even put a field staffer on the ground in the 2nd CD until just a few months before votes were counted. And at the same time, the party

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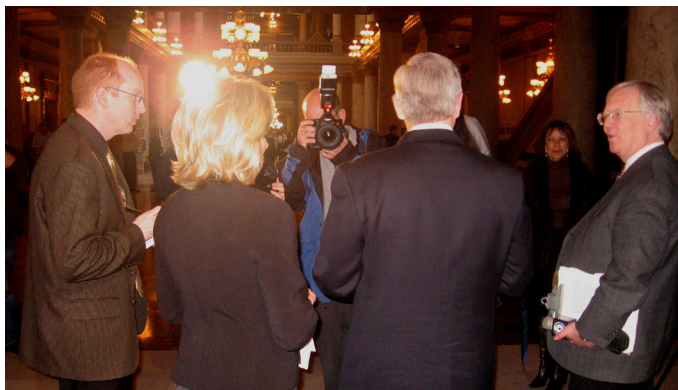
was rejecting offers by beloved icons like Judy O'Bannon to campaign for candidates in competitive races.

That an insider's insider like DeLaney, who chaired the Indiana Democratic Party and once ran Evan Bayh's gubernatorial campaign, didn't know who ran the Ellsworth campaign could lend credence to the idea that the gulf between the Democratic Party and the Democratic campaigns was appreciated by those who really won the races. Keep your hands off our race.

-- think Joe Hogsett -- it's hardly a surprise that the party sees so few Brad Ellsworths.

And the good candidates that do emerge, like Joe Pearson in 2006, are often disregarded and disrespected. Though the statewide campaign raised and spent far less than even a competitive legislative race, Pearson fell fewer than 90,000 votes (of 1.6 million cast) short of an upset. The party offered so little help that, far from having Evan Bayh starring in television ads to endorse the candidate, as he did in a handful of House races, Pearson was relegated to filming television commercials in what appeared to be his living room, and with what seemed like his own home video camcorder. It could easily be argued, by looking no further than when Pat Bauer upstaged Pearson's BMV proposal (to put the office under the control of the Secretary of State), that the party was actually counterproductive to Pearson's mission. Needless to say, JoePearsonForIndiana.com was one domain that the party wasn't registering on behalf of its candidate.

All of which was justified under the banner of prioritization: Democrats first had to take back the Indiana House. But even there, Democrats managed to lose more races than any observer expected, squeaking out with a mere one-seat majority in a landslide year for Hoosier Democrats on a map gerrymandered to their advantage. In the contested district that Democrats



Jim and Laura Schellinger answers questions from Matt Tully and Norm Cox under the glare of the klieg lamps. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)

If nothing else, Schellinger's front-runner status mostly goes to show just how weak the Democratic bench in Indiana is. But in a party that's tantamount to a recycling bin filled to the brim with serial candidates



won by the largest margin, Ron Herrell's 30th, the party had in the year prior actively sought to oust Herrell as a candidate and find another.

It's no wonder that so few Hoosiers are itching at the opportunity to run for governor as a Democrat. After all, they might just get the kind of support that Richard Young has.

Up until last month, one potential candidate was widely believed to be former House Speaker John Gregg. But when it became clear that Schellinger appeared poised to jump into the race with full party support behind him, Gregg put himself into the strangest of political positions: while refusing to rule out his own candidacy, he proceeded to malign his prospects, calling his would-be opponent Schellinger "fresh faced" and the "800-pound gorilla."

Such self-effacing titter is mirrored, albeit not exactly, only in Newt Gingrich's potential candidacy for President. The former U.S. House Speaker has said he'd only run as "a last resort" if, when in September of this

year, "there is still a vacuum" -- i.e., no candidate he deems worthy of the nomination. I'll run if everyone else disappoints, but trust me guys, you really don't want me.

Apparently Gregg deems Schellinger worthy: "He brings a unique perspective given his success in business ... I'm going to be encouraging him to do it," he told Matt Tully of the Indianapolis Star.

And yet when Gregg made those comments, he'd never even met Schellinger, suggesting that he might just be hoping for the establishment's blessing as the lieutenant governor nominee.

No doubt it'll happen behind closed doors, but having the support of today's Indiana Democratic Party is unlikely to open any. ❖

Nees is a junior at Western High School and edits IndianaOnMessage.com, a web partner of HPR.

- I would probably start by May and certainly by June." Thompson said she recently met Schellinger. Her estimation. "I think I would win," she said with a laugh (**Indianapolis Star**).

As he did in his HPR interview on March 6, when the Statehouse press corps pressed Schellinger on the issues the most they got was "I'm a moderate to conservative Democrat."

Other than that, Schellinger said there would be "21 months" to dig into the issues, but not that day.

Trust the newcomer

In a sense, part of the Democratic establishment along the Bayh-Peterson-Parker-Carson axis, is advocating to the party faithful to put their trust in a successful businessman to carry the party banner.

The last time Democrats did so was in 1980, when Batesville industrialist John Hillenbrand II ran and was defeated by Gov. Robert Orr. Hillenbrand was on board with Schellinger, noting on the Democratic Party blog Taking Down Words, "Best of luck Jim! You've got mine



Key players in the coming Schellinger gubernatorial campaign besides the candidate (center) include brother Bob (left), a LaPorte school teacher who will manage the campaign, and wife Laura. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)

and Wayne Townsend's cell phone numbers if you need to get a hold of us."

Schellinger has served on the Capitol Improvement Board and has been a generous donor to the IDP and many Democratic candidates.

The fact that a good portion of the

Indiana Democratic Party was reaching into its business sector four years after Indiana Republicans did the same with Mitch Daniels is an indicator of the dearth of talent both parties have in the Indiana General Assembly, which, along with the American Legion, supplied most of the 20th Century governors.

Senate Minority Leader Richard Young is also in the race. He is handcuffed to the legislature until at least April 29, but has been doing a steady stream of talk radio interviews while his campaign sent letters to precinct, county and district officials.

Won't be 'traditional politician'

Schellinger told the press at the Statehouse, "I'm



not going to be a traditional politician and I think people are ready for that. That's what people want: someone who represents good middle class values and values that we in Indiana hold near and dear to our heart."

Asked what he thought Gov. Daniels' "biggest mistake" was, Schellinger took a pass. "I don't want to focus on the governor's mistakes. The governor is a patriot; his heart is in the right place. He works hard to lead our state and I don't think that's what today is about."

Another reporter asked, "People don't know who you are. Who are you?" Schellinger responded with a 30-second version of his life story, which HPR exclusively covered in its March 8 edition.

He said of his company CSO (which dropped the "SchenkelShultz" part of its name on Monday), "We've done so by focusing on core purpose, on core values and vision and that's what I plan to bring to the state of Indiana. I'm here today in my Sunday best to make a good impression on all of you and the people of Indiana. You'll find that I'll keep my word. I reach out to people in every corner of the state. I will not only listen to them, but I will hear them and I will have a vision that reflects their values."

Schellinger has convinced Peterson, Carson and Gregg that he is ready to lead. "Jim has strong roots in this state, and his business leadership is exactly what this state needs," Carson said. Peterson called Schellinger "an innovator in his field" and lauded Schellinger's consensus-building skills and ability to listen to contrasting opinions. Gregg said Schellinger has the right values to lead Indiana. "Working Hoosiers need a voice in the Statehouse," Gregg said. "Jim Schellinger will be that voice."

Thompson undeterred

Jill Long Thompson seemed undeterred in the face of Schellinger's support. "As always happens in primaries, each candidate has strong support," she said. "I have very strong support in Indianapolis. When I make the decision, that will be the right time to announce who is behind me."

Last week Thompson said she had full trust in Evan Bayh and Tom Sugar when it was suggested that a



Sen. Richard Young (fourth from left) raised some eyebrows by appearing with Advance American's Eric Miller and a rally backing the controversial marriage amendment. NUVO called Miller the "most powerful man in the Statehouse." (NUVO Photo)

"neutral" party was lining up behind Schellinger.

Close allies to Thompson acknowledged this week that there would be pressure for the party to close ranks. Officials like Parker see Gov. Daniels with \$2.6 million in his war chest, well on the way to a \$20 million per nominee requirement for the 2008 election. One ally noted that Evan Bayh and Frank O'Bannon did not

close ranks until after they had campaigned against each other for more than a year. "I think Frank O'Bannon's name was actually on the primary ballot in 1988," one Democrat told HPR.

And yet many Democrats believe that Bayh and O'Bannon closing ranks was what allowed them to defeat Lt. Gov. John Mutz. Former Sen. Birch Bayh publicly thanked former First Lady Judy O'Bannon at the 2004 IDEA convention. "There's no doubt in my mind that Evan Bayh was elected governor because Frank O'Bannon was humble enough to accept the second spot," Birch Bayh said to Mrs. O'Bannon.

Republicans did the same thing that year, convincing 2000 nominee David McIntosh and then-State Sen. Murray Clark to withdraw and support Daniels. The only opposition remaining was Advance America's Eric Miller, who was called, apparently in a serious vein, the "most powerful man at the Statehouse" by NUVO's Laura McPhee in an article that Advance Indiana blogger Gary Welsh said plagiarized his work.

Thompson and Young supporters were making the case that a dialogue for the party, often seen as the "sum of their resentments," and without a competing vision to that expressed and executed by Gov. Daniels, would be good for the party. Many believe that a multiple-candidate field should be allowed to play out for 2007. By year's end, there will be plenty of data on who is raising money and picking up support and still time for a "coalescing."

Some Democrats were grumpy that the '08 campaign was already beginning. House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer, from Schellinger's hometown of South Bend, grouched in the Indianapolis Star: "To me, it's premature to have people running for governor when we are not finished with this major session. We've got lots of important issues we're still dealing with." ❖



Hill in favor of Iraq spending; Donnelly, Ellsworth weigh debate

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON - With debate set to begin today in the House of Representatives over an Iraq spending bill that would set a timeline for withdrawal of U.S. troops, three Hoosier freshmen Democrats face perhaps their most challenging vote so far as they decide whether to support their party's leadership, which backs the funding measure.

On Wednesday night, Rep. Baron Hill (D-9th CD), came out in favor of the \$124 billion emergency spending bill that calls for removing most U.S. troops by August 2008. The legislation also sets benchmarks for military and political progress in Iraq and establishes requirements for military readiness and the length of time soldiers can be deployed.

President Bush has indicated that he will veto the bill because he argues that it would place constraints on military commanders and would allow for excessive spending. The White House has requested \$100 billion. Bush is in the midst of increasing troop levels in Iraq by more than 21,000.

But Hill said that Congress must step in and change U.S. policy toward Iraq. "The 'stay-the-course' strategy in Iraq has failed," Hill said in a statement. "It is time to stop the open-ended commitment (in Iraq). It is time for the government of Iraq to take responsibility for their own security. It is time to start the process of bringing our troops home. It is time to send a clear message that Congress will no longer provide a blank check to fund this war."

Hill's support could be crucial in a vote that could occur as early as this afternoon. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Majority Leader Steny Hoyer have been working since the bill came out of committee on March 16 to round up enough support to ensure House approval. As of Wednesday, they were falling short.

Donnelly, Ellsworth remain undecided

On Wednesday afternoon, first-term Rep. Joe Donnelly (D-2nd CD) had not made up his mind. In an HPR interview, he said he was conflicted over "two imperfect choices." He said President Bush wants to secure war funding without any demands for progress in Iraq. Yet Donnelly is also leery of setting a firm deadline with troop withdrawal.

"The so-called middle ground that we Hoosiers

often try to pursue isn't out there," he said. "I have an obligation that the troops are well funded and that we have a stable Iraq. I'm trying to make sure that we achieve both goals."

The third Hoosier freshman, Rep. Brad Ellsworth (D-8th CD), also was undecided about the Iraq spending bill on Wednesday afternoon.

"My number one consideration is ensuring our troops on the ground, and those on the way, have what they need in terms of equipment, weapons and training to do their jobs safely," Ellsworth said in a statement. "Within that frame, I am weighing what constituents are saying and military leaders are conveying in secret briefings with what my conscience tells me. This decision will be my own, and will be influenced only by the considerations I laid out."

Pelosi faces high stakes

Another factor that may weigh in the decisions that Hill, Ellsworth and Donnelly make is the need for Pelosi and

Hoyer to achieve a victory on an issue that may help shape their tenure.

The Indiana freshmen are among the more conservative Democrats who have said they would be willing to break with House leadership. But all three also are competing in tough districts and need national Democratic support in their 2008 re-election efforts.

"The new Indiana Democrats are in a tight squeeze," said Larry Sabato, a professor of political science at the University of Virginia. "Their constituencies are more conserva-

tive than the House Democratic leadership, but the House Democratic leadership needs to score a big victory for this vote."

Pelosi must persuade moderates and conservatives because many House liberals are coming out against the measure, asserting that it doesn't go far enough to end the war.

As debate begins on the House floor, the stakes for Pelosi are enormous. "She has to win it," said Sabato. "If she doesn't win, she's in for a long two years."

Republicans keep an eye on Hoosier troika

The imperative for victory notwithstanding, it's possible that House leaders may give some members from conservative districts the okay to vote against the Iraq bill. "They are candidates," Sabato said of the Hoosier freshmen. "Whether they get a pass is an open question."

But it is certain that Republicans will be watching Hill, Ellsworth and Donnelly closely. "It's going to come down to whether they are willing to put the needs of the



Hill talks with constituents in Madison. (Madison Courier Photo)



Democratic leadership over the needs of Indiana voters... and the interests of our troops on the ground," said Ken Spain, press secretary for the National Republican Congressional Committee, the House GOP campaign arm.

"This supplemental bill would micromanage commanders and place military matters in the hands of Washington politicians," he said.

Republicans accuse Democrats of trying to buy

votes through extra spending added to the Iraq bill and attempting to coerce the rank-and-file by threatening future funding for district projects.

But as the momentous vote approached, Donnelly said he is not being strong-armed by the House Democratic leadership. "The only pressure I feel is the obligation I have to fully fund our troops and to make the right decision for my district and for our country," he said. ❖

The Iraq Index

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The week began with President Bush observing the fourth anniversary of the Iraq War by urging "patience" while more than 1,100 peace protests were conducted around the country, including 85 people who had a candle-light vigil in Valparaiso.

"At this point in the war, our most important mission is helping the Iraqis secure their capital," President Bush said. "Until Baghdad's citizens feel secure in their own homes and neighborhoods, it will be difficult for Iraqis to make further progress toward political reconciliation or economic rebuilding, steps necessary for Iraq to build a democratic society. Prime Minister Maliki and General Petraeus emphasized that the Baghdad security plan is still in its early stages, and success will take months, not days or weeks. Yet, those on the ground are seeing some hopeful signs. The Iraqi government has completed the deployment of three Iraqi army brigades to the capital, where they've joined the seven Iraqi army brigades and nine national police brigades that were already in the area. The new strategy will need more time to take effect. And there will be good days, and there will be bad days ahead as the security plan unfolds."

But former Congressman Lee Hamilton told the Center for American Progress on Monday, "To succeed in Iraq, you're going to have to do a lot of things very well and do them very quickly. And there is a real question on my mind whether the two principal governments involved can achieve that kind of effort." Hamilton added that the U.S. war effort "has been marked by several years of astounding incompetence."

HPR checked the Brookings Institute's Iraq Index, which was updated on March 19.

U.S. Troops in Baghdad: 6,000 on March 14, compared to 2,700 in mid-February.

Total U.S. Troops in Iraq: 130,000 in mid-February; 141,000 in early March.



President Bush and Vice President Cheney greet Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Maliki during a conference call (White House Photos).

Diyala Province: There has been a 30 percent increase in attacks on U.S. forces in this province northeast of Baghdad.

U.S. Fatalities: 3,210 on March 19; 1,187 caused by Improvised Explosive Devices (36.9 percent). U.S. forces are detecting and successfully dismantling an estimated 50 percent of IEDs.

U.S. Wounded: 24,042 as of March 18.

Iraq Police Fatalities: 1,300 killed between June 2003 and March 18.

Iraqi Civilian Deaths: Estimated to be between 53,000 and 59,000.

Multiple Fatal Bombings: 13 in March 2005; 37 in March 2006; 69 in December 2006; 29 so far in March 2007. Killed: 11,280; wounded: 23,263.

Journalists killed: 95, including 74 Iraqis and two Americans;

Prison population: 17,000 in U.S. custody.

Estimated Strength of Insurgency: 20,000 to 30,000 in October 2006; 15,000 to 20,000 in October 2005.

Attacks on Oil Installations: 399.

Internally Displaced Iraqis: 750,000 as of Feb.

Percentage of Professional Class who Have Left the Country: 40 percent.

Exiled Iraqis: 1.8 million.

Iraqi Security Forces: 329,000 in March 2007; 250,500 in March 2006.

Crude Oil Production: 2.14 million barrels a day (pre-war was 2.5 million).

Oil Revenues: \$2.11 billion in February 2007; \$82.66 since the war ended.

Electrical Production: 3,540 megawatts (3.9 megawatts pre-war).

Unemployment Rate: estimated to be between 25-40 percent.

Inflation: 50 percent in 2006; 20 percent in 2005.

Internet Subscribers: 197,310 in August 2006.

Doctors Murdered: 2,000.

Doctors Kidnapped: 250.

Doctors Leaving Iraq: 12,000. ❖



Peters assesses Fort Wayne Republican primary campaign

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - HPR sat down with Allen County Commissioner Nelson Peters to talk about his Republican primary campaign for mayor against architect Matt Kelty. Peters was preparing to put an endorsement by U.S. Rep. Mark Souder in motion with a direct mail campaign.

HPR: Give us a campaign overview.

Peters: We're moving ahead according to plan. We put a plan together back in December that laid out when the polling was going to be done, when we were going to start television, when the signs would go up, when the mailers would go out, when we were going to do radio. We are key to push that forward according to plan. When you put together a plan you stick to it and you become successful.

HPR: What does Congressman Souder's endorsement mean for your campaign?

Peters: "It does a lot. I'm humbled by his endorsement. If you've got somebody of that stature who comes and says you can lead this community in a way that needs to be led, I think it's going to mean a lot to this campaign moving forward. Congressman Souder has a lot of credibility with his constituents in the Fort Wayne/Allen County area.

HPR: What is your polling telling you?

Peters: We've been up in all the categories right now. But there are a number of undecideds out there we need to get to before the May primary to insure victory.

HPR: What impact will newly annexed Aboite Township participating in its first city election have on the primary and the general?

Peters: The primary there is going to be some impact. There are about 30,000 votes cast in 1999, the last contested primary, and about half of that four years later. I suspect with the addition of Aboite, the Huegenard Road addition and the Cook Road annexation, we'll probably get to somewhere around 35,000 to 40,000 voters. Moving forward into the general election, I really do believe it is the Republicans to lose because 40,000 new residents into Fort Wayne because of those annexations, 60 percent of whom I believe are Republican.

HPR: Is that why it took Tom Henry so long to emerge for the Democrats?

Peters: I suspect that was some of the reason. A Democrat would have to think twice about moving forward in this type of election right now. To be successful, they are going to have to do a grassroots campaign and get out and do some of the things we are already doing. I would hope by virtue of running and winning this primary it puts us on the ground running so that we can overtake Tom moving into the general election.

HPR: You've got endorsements from every elected Fort Wayne Republican official above township trustee, so you seem to have the establishment support.

Peters: It does a lot to provide that establishment support. Some of the naysayers who say, "Well, it is all establishment support." But when you look at some of the elected officials who are, indeed, backing us, including some who have been in office for just three months, so we've got some tenured officeholders along with some new people. So I think it is a little bit unfair to say that it

is establishment support. We have the support of elected officials who I have had to work with in one capacity or another come to the plate and say, "We believe that you can move this city forward."

HPR: What are the key differences between you and Matt Kelty?

Peters: I prefer to focus on the future of Fort Wayne as opposed to looking at the opposition. But I think if you're going to characterize a major difference, it's leadership and experience on my part. I've been in private industry at executive levels, in the public sector

at executive levels. I know the buttons to push to make the things work.

HPR: And a race against Tom Henry this fall? What will be the key issues?

Peters: The issues are jobs, without question. The issues are taxes, and how we can reduce them. The issues are service to the community. We've got a number of areas who want the city of Fort Wayne to do something for them. The economies of scale can dictate some savings to those people: if you can provide services at a lesser cost than what we've seen in the past. ❖



Commissioner Peters (second from left) with support that includes Reps. Matt Bell, Randy Borrer and Senate President Pro Tempore David Long. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)



2008 Indiana Governor

Governor 2008: Republican: Gov. Mitch Daniels. Democrat: Senate Minority Leader Richard Young, Jim Schellinger, Jill Long Thompson. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Results:** Daniels (R) 1,302,912, Kernan (D) 1,113,900, Gividen (L) 31,644. **2008 Forecast:** We believe that Thompson will enter and Young appears in for the duration. The fact that Schellinger's three co-chairs are Peterson, Carson and Gregg gives him a foothold in all regions of the state. Meanwhile, Daniels continues to till the economic seeds he sowed during the first to years of his term when he helped break ground on the new Greensburg Honda plant. **Primary Status:** Tossup. **General Status:** LEANS DANIELS.



2008 Congressional

Congressional District 5: Republican: U.S. Rep. Dan Burton, Dr. John McGoff. **Geography:** **Media Market:** Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, South Bend. **People:** Urban/rural 73/27%; median income \$40,381; Poverty 9.5%; Race 84% white, 8% black; 5 Hispanic; Blue/white collar: 34/50%. 2006 Republican Primary Result: Burton 61,150, Alfred 6,869, Wakley 4,822. **2006 General Result:** Burton (R) 133,118, Carr (D) 64,362, Sharlow (L) 7,431, Miller (I) 18. **2008 Forecast:** State Sen. Jeff Drozda is telling people that he is considering entry into this race, with a decision to come soon after the Indiana General Assembly sine die on April 29. Our initial reaction to a Drozda entry is that it would potentially put a dent in Burton's usually big support from the evangelical Christian wing of the party. **Primary Status:** Leans Burton

2007 Legislative Caucus

Senate District 8: Democrat: Jim Arnold, Lake County Deputy Prosecutor Rob Neary, Robin Oshinski, Lynne Kaser, Debra Birkholtz, Michigan City School Board President Jeff Jones. **2007 Caucus Forecast:** LaPorte County Councilman Mark Yagelski dropped out of this race and endorsed Birkholtz. The party pros we've talked to think this is close to being sewn up for Birkholtz, a former NIPSCO union official. **Caucus Status:** LEANS BIRKHOLTZ.

2007 Mayoral

Crown Point: Republican: Mayor Dan Klein, Gayle Van Session; Democrat Dan Jordan, Karin Mason,

David Uran. **2003 Republican Primary Results:** Klein 1,447, Van Session 1,157, Roth 760. **2003 General Results:** Klein (R) 4,289, Isailovich (D) 2,158. **2007 Forecast:** City Democrats have endorsed Jordan. The Republicans are feuding after the Dan Dumezich-Todd Rokita fundraiser that drew more than 300 people. We think the GOP primary could get real nasty, with some stories in the offing centered around sex and e-mail. Stay tuned. **Primary Status:** TOSSUP.

Indianapolis: Democrat: Mayor Bart Peterson. Republican: Michael Simpson, Darrell Morris, James W. Black II, Greg Ballard, Lawrence Shouse. David Moscrip. **2003 Results:** Peterson (D) 92,763, Jordan (R) 55,354. **2007 Forecast:** Marion County Republicans have voted to slate Ballard. **Primary Status:** LEANS BALLARD.

Jeffersonville: Mayor Rob Waiz. Tom Galligan. **Republican: 2003 Democratic Primary:** Waiz 2,187, Galligan 1,708, Muncy 252, Ogden 166. **2003 General Results:** Waiz (D) 3,711, Raymond (R) 2,354, Fisher (L) 118. **2007 Forecast:** Watch for more stories on the domain name-gobbling Waiz campaign, which is under a city ethics commission probe after it bought Galligan's potential Internet website names. And this is a classic example of why such antics are stupid. Most of the news stories on the Waiz re-election bid were about that idiotic move, as opposed to the jobs he's been able to attract to his city. **Primary Status:** LEANS WAIZ.

Kokomo: Democrat: Councilman Greg Goodnight, Councilman Bob Hayes, Andy Castner. Republican: Mayor Matt McKillip, Councilman Rick Hamilton, Tom Hamilton. **2003 Primary Results:** Republican: McKillips 1,565, Donoghue 972, Bolinger 327, McKay 243, T. Hamilton 38. Democrat: Castner 1,360, Lushin 1,358, Alexander 969, Ellis 34. **2003 General Results:** McKillip (R) 5,229, Castner (D) 4101, Dunlap (I) 832. **2007 Forecast:** Goodnight had a fundraiser that drew more than 200 people this week, raising \$5,000. He begins his walking campaign, which he intends to cover the entire city by primary day. **Primary Status:** LEANS MCKILLIP; LIKELY GOODNIGHT.

Muncie: Democrats: Jim Mansfield Jr., Councilman Chuck Leonard, Philip H. Peckinpugh. Republican: Councilman David Taylor, Sharon McShurley. **2003 Results:** Canan (R) 7,211, Tyler (D) 6,758. **2007 Forecast:** Leonard, said at a Wednesday debate that he would reorganize city government from the top down, eliminating department heads and supervisors and putting more police officers on the streets (**Muncie Star Press**). "We have money for a brand new roundabout downtown and it is like beating a dead horse," Leonard said. "Sooner or later, you have to complete downtown Muncie and move into neighborhoods." Mansfield said growing the tax base with new businesses and jobs was the method to lower taxes, along with growing by voluntary annexation. **Primary Status:** LEANS MANSFIELD; Likely Taylor. ❖



Puckett eyes 2nd CD run

By **BEVERLY PHILLIPS**

Our 2nd CD sources say that Goshen commercial real estate executive **Luke Puckett** is the choice of former Congressman **Chris Chocola** to square off against U.S. Rep. **Joe Donnelly** in 2008. Sources tell us that Puckett is a former missionary, fluent in Spanish and will have some self-funding abilities. One source described him as "charismatic."

Elizabeth Edwards' cancer returns

Elizabeth Edwards said today in Chapel Hill that her cancer has returned, but her husband, presidential candidate **John Edwards**, said he would continue on with his campaign. John Edwards said tests this week had shown his wife, Elizabeth, had cancer in a rib on her right side. He said the cancer is treatable but not curable. Elizabeth Edwards said she was "incredibly optimistic" and said her expectations about the future were unchanged. "The campaign goes on. The campaign goes on strongly," Edwards said in Chapel Hill at noon. Edwards will appear at an Indianapolis fundraiser on March 30 at Ruth's Chris Steakhouse downtown, hosted by **Robin Winston**.

Howey column in Muncie Free Press

HPR Publisher **Brian A. Howey's** column returns to the Muncie media market in the **Muncie Free Press** at www.munciefreepress.com. Howey's column appeared in the **Muncie Evening Press** and the **Muncie Star Press** for more than a decade.

"The Apprentice" visits Indy sans Trump

Indiana's 5,000-member union for sheet metal workers wraps up day two of hosting an international competition featuring 60 of the best apprentice sheet metal workers from the U.S. and Canada. The annual event is taking place for the first time in Indianapolis at the union's apprentice training school. "These students represent the best of the best out of 3,500 competitors," said Local No. 20 business manager **Jay Potesta**. Apprentices and skilled journeymen from the local union will work on the Lucas Oil Stadium and the Indianapolis Airport midfield terminal that combined will use nearly 3-million pounds of sheet metal.

Over at the Statehouse, Local No. 20 is advocating for HB 1497 that would require air quality testing for public buildings. The union previously worked with Sen. **Patricia Miller** to require this for public schools. The current bill would expand existing legislation to include public buildings and require all inspectors to be certified. "Not being certified to do these inspections is akin to being a coroner without a medical degree," said Potesta.



Allison Murr, 27, of West Palm Beach, FL, is the sole female sheet metal apprentice in competition with 59 male students. The international competition is in Indianapolis for the first time and hosted by the Sheet Metal Workers Local No. 20.

Government streaming on the web

Can't make it to the City-County Building for the next zoning meeting? No problem. Beginning last week, government access television WCTY-16 launched Internet streaming of its city and county meeting coverage. The meetings will continue to be broadcast on cable networks Comcast and Bright House. **Rick Maultra**, Director of Cable Communications Agency for the City of Indianapolis, says it's been a long time coming. "This is something I've been working on for a decade to get done. The time is right whereby the cost of transport has been going down. There are a lot of people who work in Marion County, but live elsewhere and can't get our programming on cable. This will be a tremendous asset," he said. Within the next few months, the station expects video on demand that will allow for watching and browsing archived meetings. Maultra also says future plans include Internet features that will allow for broadcasting video services the station provides that aren't always broadcast on cable – things like employee or poll worker trainings.

Go to www.indygov.org and click "Local Government" and "Cable Communications Agency/Government Access TV."

It is the third government unit to begin streaming meetings this week. The House began streaming Indiana Commerce Connector hearings at <http://mediaserver.ihets.org/icc> and the Indiana Senate is streaming Statehouse Room 431 hearings at <http://www.in.gov/legislative/session/video.html> ❖

**Got a tip for the Boar's Nest?
Send it to: phillipscgroup@comcast.net**



Rich James, Post-Tribune - Grab a road atlas and open it to the greater Northwest Indiana-Chicago area. The expressways feeding in and out of Chicago constitute a spider web of transportation. It is an efficient, detailed system -- even though the Dan Ryan is constantly under construction. Now ease your eyes down to the southeast and the highway matrix in Northwest Indiana. Kind of looks like a two-legged spider was at work. It's not coincidence that commercial and residential development sprang from Illinois' highway system. The same can be said for the commuter rail system in Illinois compared to Northwest Indiana's. One's a Cadillac. One's a Ford -- and remember, Ford produced the Edsel. Besides

what the spider webs reveal, there are abundant reasons why the Illiana Expressway is a project whose time has come, finally. There are few good reasons why it shouldn't be built. I'll concede that some rural property owners will lose some land. But, with careful planning, that can be kept to a minimum. While the land issue is real, all the opposition talk about foreign operators, environmental concerns and the fact that the road would be a tollway is little more than window dressing. It's like piling on once the tackle has been made. I don't really care who runs the road. And there wasn't a peep when foreign firms bought Mit-tal and Amoco. And, in terms of environment, if the new highway can eliminate tractor-trailers from crawling on the Borman, spewing emissions, I'm for it. And the fact it will be a tollway isn't relevant, either. The highway would never be built as a freeway. In one sense, it would be a freeway because we won't have to pay for it. So, will Senate Bill 1, which must be passed for the highway to have a chance, be approved? Depends on whether area legislators take a stand. State Rep. Bob Kuzman, D-Crown Point, saying the people have spoken, jumped on. Some, not the majority, have spoken. Lake County Surveyor George Van Til invoked a Democratic quote 20 years ago: "It's time we look past the next election and work for the next generation." Statesmen do. Politicians don't. We'll find out what the NWI legislators are made of over the next few weeks. ❖

Gary Gerard, Warsaw Times-Union - For the record, here is the exact quote from Anne Colter's speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference: "I

was going to have a few comments on the other Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards, but it turns out you have to go into rehab if you use the word 'faggot,' so I - so kind of an impasse, can't really talk about Edwards." That's the quote that generated all the controversy. "Faggot" is a loaded word. It is a weapon used to demean and wound our community. The news media has a responsibility to not simply become an avenue that allows Ann Coulter the opportunity to broadcast her vile slurs. Below this was a well-written form letter meant to be sent out to newspapers who carry Coulter's column, and the company that syndicates it. Frankly, it was a pretty impressive, well-organized campaign because we here at the little old Times-Union wound up getting more than 5,000 e-mails. ❖



or is dead? ❖

Larry Sabato, Crystal Ball - Last week the Crystal Ball's David Wasserman went further than anyone has in projecting out the states' estimated gains and losses in the U.S. House of Representatives--all the way to 2030. [See this chart.] Some states will record stunning gains over the next three Censuses combined: Florida (+9 House seats), Texas (+8), and Arizona (+5). Other states have modest additions: California (+3), Nevada (+2), North Carolina (+2), and one each for Georgia, Oregon, Utah, Virginia, and Washington. The big losers are New York (-6), Ohio (-4), Pennsylvania (-4), and Illinois (-3). Massachusetts and Michigan both lose 2 House seats, and 12 states lose one House seat: Alabama, Connecticut, **Indiana**, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, Rhode Island, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. All told, 11 states gain seats at the expense of 18 states that drop House representation. ❖

Stephanie Salter, Terre Haute Tribune-Star - To provide the working poor with medical coverage but only on the backs of people who are addicted to cigarettes ought to make us hang our heads in shame. How about the direct, honest approach? Raise taxes on everyone, or at least on some appropriate corporate players — say, America's pink and plump insurance industry — to do the right thing by poor, underinsured Hoosiers. Using smokers as the primary revenue source for state health care is also short-sighted. What happens when the cash cow has kicked the habit



Daniels, Johanns laud BioTown Tech site

REYNOLDS - A groundbreaking ceremony was held at the future site of the BioTown Technology Suite, a complex that will combine the city's waste to produce enough fuel and electricity for the city to be self-reliant (**Lafayette Journal & Courier**). In technical terms, the Technology Suite will combine three processes -- an anaerobic digestion, gasification and fast pyrolysis -- to produce methane, syngas, bio-oil and fertilizer for the community. Gov. Mitch Daniels was on hand at the ceremony, joined by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns as well as other state and local officials to launch the next phase of the project. Daniels called the project a pioneering effort in the move toward energy independence, both from foreign sources and from fossil fuels altogether. "Today is about energy self-sufficiency," Daniels said. "It's about Indiana being a leader. ... We believe in agriculture and we believe in small town America." Johanns said Indiana is leading the way for the nation in renewable energy and efficiency. "Every night before I go to bed, I thank the Lord for your state," Johanns said. He called the project a "bold vision."



Higdon appointed GOP press secretary

INDIANAPOLIS - The Indiana Republican Party today announced the promotion of Jessica Higdon to the position of press secretary. "Jessica came to us with a background in journalism and communications and has proven to be a great asset to our team," said Communications Director Robert Vane. "We are fortunate she has chosen to help us promote the Re-

publican agenda of economic growth, balanced budgets, and education reform." Higdon started at the Indiana Republican Party in December 2006 as the Communications Coordinator.

After hours of testimony, no vote on gay marriage ban

INDIANAPOLIS - The fate of the proposed constitutional amendment banning gay marriage in Indiana remains unknown after members of a key legislative panel heard hours of opposing arguments Wednesday but did not vote on the matter (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). A vote from the House Rules and Legislative Procedures Committee could come next week -- either on the amendment's original form or after deleting a controversial second section of the proposal.

Daniels says IBM center will cut paperwork

MERRILLVILLE - Gov. Mitch Daniels says a new call center in Merrillville will bolster the private contractor that began operating a portion of Indiana's welfare system this week (**Post-Tribune**). Last year, an IBM-led coalition won a \$1.6 billion contract for 10 years to run the client intake portion of Indiana's welfare program. The Merrillville center is a companion to one being built in Indianapolis. It's part of a network of centers that will allow potential welfare clients to call in or use the Internet to apply for benefits 24 hours a day, rather than go into a welfare office. "I've talked to (welfare workers) with master's degrees in social work who spend most of their day filling out paperwork. This should change that," Daniels said. On day two of the private contractor, Daniels said, more than 99 percent of the state staff who handled welfare intakes transferred to the private contractor.

Cantrell indicted

HAMMOND - After years of

federal scrutiny, renowned political insider Robert Cantrell was indicted Wednesday on 11 felony counts including fraud and tax evasion (**Times**). Federal authorities allege Cantrell illegally earned profits from a North Township contract he helped engineer while working for the township and then convinced that contractor to fraudulently add two nonemployees to its health insurance plan. A federal grand jury Wednesday morning indicted Cantrell on 11 charges -- four counts of honest services fraud, three counts of insurance fraud and four counts of filing false tax returns. Cantrell declined to comment Wednesday when contacted by The Times, and his attorney could not be reached.

Mass transit urged

INDIANAPOLIS - Improving public transportation needs to be explored further as Indiana deals with traffic, pollution and energy challenges in the near future, lawmakers said yesterday (**Associated Press**). "It's all a matter of priorities," Rep. Matt Pierce, D-Bloomington, said during a hearing on the issue. "We control our own destiny." Rep. Terri Austin, D-Anderson, who helped organize the meeting, said Gov. Mitch Daniels' latest road proposals have drawn considerable attention, but the topic of public transportation has attracted little notice. Austin said new roads aren't the only answer to Indiana's transportation problems. "Mass transit must play a part in any future plans," she said.

Madhi army splintering

BAGHDAD - The violent Shiite militia known as the Mahdi Army is breaking into splinter groups, with up to 3,000 gunmen now financed directly by Iran and no longer loyal to the firebrand cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, adding a potentially even more deadly element to Iraq's violent mix (**Associated Press**). The breakup is an ominous development. ❖