



Senate kings, queens on reforms

Long journey ahead as health reforms head to Senate floor

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

WASHINGTON - Everyone from President Barack Obama to Sen. Olympia Snowe, the Maine Republican who has cast the only GOP vote for a health care reform plan so far, has asserted over the last two days that Congress still has a long journey ahead to reach a final health care bill.

Evidence of that arduous trek can be seen each week following the Democratic and Republican policy lunches in the Senate. When lawmakers emerge from these gatherings, they tend to be engulfed by reporters.

Like bees trying to extract nectar from the most radiant flower in the garden, the journalistic swarm hovers around Sen. Max Baucus, D-Montana and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, which this week became the last of five congressional panels to approve a health care



President Obama with U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh at South Bend boarding Air Force One.

bill.

But it's not just the Senate leaders who generate buzz. Almost every Democrat - and even a Republican or two - wandering back to his or her office can be a viable target for an important health care comment.

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Dan bows to the Dow

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - On the day the Dow Jones Industrial Average returned to the 10,000 mark for the first time since the scary days of Oct. 3, 2008, Dan Dumezich walked into a meeting yesterday with the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee in Washington and took a pass on a challenge to U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh.

These two events were linked.

Dumezich had spent a good part of the year lining up support. He traveled the state in August and September meeting with Republican groups. "I had commitments of \$8 million," Dumezich told HPI shortly after he sent an e-mail saying he would not run. "After much of deliberation, I have decided not to run for the U.S. Senate against Evan Bayh in 2010," Dumezich said. "Over the past



"I wonder about Sen. Bayh. The man can't brush his teeth without taking a poll."

- STATE REP. CHARLIE

BROWN, pressing Bayh to support the public health reform option



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few months, I have spoken to thousands of people across our great state. I would like to thank the people from Indiana for sharing their thoughts with me. It was a pleasure to meet with Hoosier leaders and discuss their concerns, issues and hopes."

Going into his deliberations, Domezich said he needed "one in three" odds in a race against Bayh, the two-term Democrat who is a prohibitive favorite to win a third term in 2010 with a war chest of more than \$12 million. But when the Dow hit 10,000, Domezich said he felt the odds were more like "one in five."

"When we saw the Dow return to 10,000, that means we're seeing a much more robust economy. I think the Democrats will take credit for that. Bayh voted for the stimulus package." These factors led Domezich to believe that he had only about a 20 percent chance of upsetting Bayh. Those odds, he said, were unacceptable given the time he would have to spend and for his contributors. "That kind of risk did not make sense," he said.

Domezich conducted a poll in September and talked with key Republicans, including Gov. Mitch Daniels, Secretary of State Todd Rokita and Attorney General Greg Zoeller, who encouraged him to run. He also said that the Senatorial Committee was committed to challenging Sen. Bayh, a member of the Senate Banking Committee.

NBC business analyst Dylan Ratigan said this morning, "The government has changed rules for Wall Street to allow them access to trillions of dollars of taxpayer money. Not only is it allowing Wall Street to make billions," it has resulted in a tightening of credit on Wall Street. He called it the "abdication of duty by our government."

Filmmaker Michael Moore,

whose latest movie is "Capitalism: A Love Story," commented on NBC's Today Show this morning on the new round of Wall Street bonuses, "There is an anger that's building out there. These people burned down our economy and now these people are rewarded for it. If people allow this to happen, they deserve what they get. It's a year after the crash and not one single regulation has been passed. They are out of control and they have not been reined in."



One day after Bayh met privately with President Obama in the Oval Office, he urged Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid to "endorse an independent debt-fighting panel to get America's fiscal house in order." Bayh argued the upcoming congressional vote to raise the U.S. debt ceiling should be tied to the creation of "a special process that allows Congress and the administration to face up to our nation's long-term fiscal imbalances, and allows for deliberation and a vote on a comprehensive package addressing these issues."

"Each citizen's share of today's debt is more than \$38,000," Bayh added. "The bigger our deficits, the fewer resources we have to provide critical investments in energy, education and health care, and tax relief for small businesses and middle-class families. And the bigger our deficits, the more we must borrow from foreign creditors, including the Chinese, to finance our massive debt."

At the time of the near economic collapse, Bayh characterized it as a "systemic failure" of the banking and financial system. Moore said today that the top five banks now control 75 percent of the nation's assets.

With Domezich's candidacy off the table, the Republican field now includes State Sen. Marlin Stutzman of Howe, Carmel plumber and Tea Party activist Richard Behney, and Win-



chester financial adviser Don Bates Jr.

Stutzman would be the candidate most likely to attract a wide array of support from the GOP establishment to the evangelical right after serving in both the Indiana House and Senate. Behney hopes to harness the anger of the Tea Party movement that is still drawing robust and angry crowds across the state. An event in Wabash recently drew 120 people, according to 5th CD Republican Brose McVey. Bates is also working to line up support on the Christian right.

Of the current field, Stutzman would have a slight advantage.

Domezich, a Chicago tax attorney who is former two-term Indiana state representative and Schererville

judge, called his decision "hard to make" and said that any Republican "would be better than Evan Bayh. No one should get a free pass. When I first started looking at this race, no one else was running." But he said he would not endorse any of the other Republicans at this point.

The Dow surged across the psychological 10,000 barrier after sagging to around 6,500 earlier this year as some analysts even speculated that the U.S. economy could end up in a depression. It was JPMorgan Chase that kicked off the rally by reporting its biggest profit since 2007 at \$3.6 billion. The Financial Times observed, "The unexpected results from JPMorgan, coupled with relatively resilient U.S. retail sales, and better earnings than expected from Intel on Tuesday, sparked a broader market rally." ❖

Health reforms, from page 1

Every senator can be a king -or queen - when it comes to health care reform because of the political breakdown of the chamber. Republicans other than Snowe (pictured below) are coalescing around the argument that the Democratic health care bills cost too much, raise taxes, does little to curb medical spending and would lead to government control of the health care sector. That puts the pressure on the 60 senators in the Democratic caucus, which is exactly the number needed to squelch a filibuster. So far, Senate leaders have vowed to follow the traditional path on health care reform and pass it with a supermajority.

Baucus, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nevada, and Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Connecticut and a member of the Senate Health Committee, are now huddling in Reid's office to merge the Finance bill with a measure the Health panel passed over the summer.

"There was strong consensus that crafting a bill that can garner 60 votes is an attainable goal," the three senators said in an Oct. 14 statement after their first day of talks. "We all share the belief that failure is not an option, and we are energized with how close we stand to bringing meaningful reform to our health insurance system."

Both bills would mandate that individuals buy insurance, provide subsidies for those who can't afford it and prohibit insurers from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions or dropping it because of illness.

But the Health Committee bill features a government-run insurance program for people under 65, called a public option, and an employer mandate. The Finance version doesn't include either provision.

The Finance bill, which costs \$829 billion over 10 years, would reduce the deficit by \$81 billion, according to the Congressional Budget Office. The CBO scores the Health Committee bill at \$645 billion, but because of the panel's jurisdiction, it left out big chunks of policy, like how to pay for expanded coverage, that were filled in by the Finance committee.

Snowe's vote in favor of the Finance bill was hailed as a breakthrough by Obama and Baucus. Echoing many Democratic senators, she said that Congress stands on the precipice of history on health care reform.

She said her vote was an effort to keep the process moving forward. But she warned that it could change based on how the Senate health care bills are melded.

"My vote today is my vote today," she said at the Oct. 13 Senate Finance Committee markup. "It doesn't forecast what my vote will be tomorrow."

She stressed that she wanted to see the CBO score of the merged bill before the Senate proceeds to a health care debate on the floor, which could push its commencement off to late October.

In a scrum after the Senate policy lunches on Oct. 14, Baucus acknowledged that many senators will wait for the CBO score before determining their vote. Sen. Evan





Bayh is likely to be one of Baucus' colleagues who withholds his final judgment until seeing the deficit impact of the final bill.

The challenge for Democrats will be to hold together Bayh and other moderates and liberals like Sens. Jay Rockefeller, D-West Virginia, and Charles Schumer, D-New York, who have vowed to add a public option to the bill when it reaches the Senate floor.

The competing views likely will generate plenty of compromise ideas like some kind of trigger for a public option, which Snowe has advocated. But the proposals will have to keep liberals on board who have vowed to fall on their swords over not just a public option but one that is based on Medicare reimbursement rates, rather than negotiated payments to providers.

Bayh was been pressed on that front Wednesday when labor unions in Northwest Indiana rallied for the public option,

"Evan Bayh is important to us, and we want to work with him," Dan Murchek, president of the Northwest Indiana Federation of Labor, told the Post-Tribune. "But we strongly support a public option, and we've noticed a trend that our ranks are voting more than they have in awhile. They came out and supported Obama, so they can make a statement to Bayh as well."

State Rep. Charlie Brown was less diplomatic about his feelings toward Bayh's indecision toward a public option. "I wonder about Sen. Bayh; the man can't brush his teeth without taking a poll," he was quoted in the Post-Tribune. "All of us know what happens to people who stand in the middle of the road: They're going to get hit by both sides."

Sorting out the swirling opinions requires something that has been in short supply throughout the health care process so far: strong presidential leadership. Obama praised Snowe's "political courage" after her Finance Committee vote.

Now he'll have to demonstrate backbone. He'll have to weigh in on the public option and other controversial matters and show how his general principles, such as his demand that the final health care bill not add "one dime" to the federal deficit, can be met in actual legislation.

And while he's trying to cobble together a Senate supermajority, he's got to deal with a House that is trying to combine three health care bills that are substantially to the left of the Senate Finance measure and contain a public option.

"We are closer than ever before to passing health care reform," Obama said on Oct. 14 after the Senate Finance Committee vote. "Now is the time to dig in and work even harder to get this done."

As Snowe said, there are still miles to go on the journey. ❖

Health reforms have 'all been about politics'

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - "It's all been about politics."

The day after she became the only Republican in Congress to vote for a health care reform bill, U.S. Sen. Olympia Snowe of Maine made that comment on MSNBC's Morning Joe. She had been asked by host Joe Scarborough whether a decade ago, would there have been other Republicans who could have supported the bill pushed by

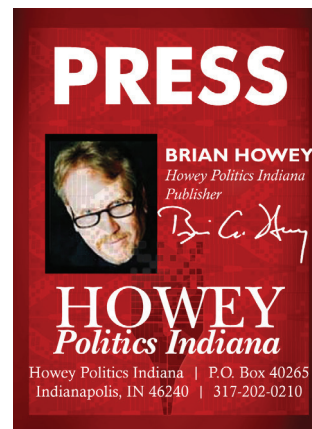
Finance Chairman Max Baucus. Snowe answered yes. The Baucus bill, while not perfect and not guaranteeing her vote on the final package, was based on market principles, it is employer based and not the "government option." Snowe added, "More small businesses will have access to this immediately, increasing competition. We don't have to go outside the system to finance this."

The price tag at \$829 billion over the next decade will actually help reduce the \$1.4 trillion budget deficit by \$81 billion, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Going into 2009, I had hoped that President Obama and Congressional Republicans would have spent the year working together to solve the huge problems facing America. But from the onset, Congressional Republicans made a political calculation. There would be virtually no support for any of Obama's initiatives. The calculation was made in an effort to position the party to regain power in the 2010 mid-term elections, if Sen. Snowe - one of the few Congressional Republicans left in New England - is to be believed.

The strategy is questionable. A Quinnipiac Poll released on Oct. 7 revealed an approve/disapprove rating for Congressional Republicans at 25/64 percent, with 42 percent of Republicans disapproving. Only 29 percent think Republicans on Capitol Hill are acting in good faith; voters trust President Obama more than Republicans, 47/31 percent, to handle health care; voters 53/25 percent have an unfavorable opinion of the Republican Party.

On Congress as a whole, the Real Clear Politics average is a 25-percent approval rating and 66.2 percent disapproval. Gallup put that number at 21/72 percent; CBS News had it at 22/65 percent. On the generic ballot ques-





tion, the Real Clear Politics average is 43.7 percent for the Democrats and 39.3 percent for Republicans, though CBS News has the spread at 46 percent for the Democrats and 33 percent for Republicans.

We now have Republicans defending the insurance companies while the insurance companies are trying to derail the reforms.

How smart is that? In a June 12-13 Gallup Poll, only 34 percent were confident that GOP leaders Congress would make the right decisions about health care reform — less than the insurance companies (35 percent) or the pharmaceutical companies (40 percent). By contrast, more have confidence in Dem leaders (42 percent), and even more trust Obama (58 percent).

I had hoped a savvy Republican Party would have designed an alternative plan. With three and a half years before the next presidential election, the party could have enlisted their top thinkers - former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, and key Congressional Republicans like our own Mike Pence - to then hit the talk shows and the road to stump for the Republican alternative. Romney actually was one public official who came up with a universal insurance plan, though it is a work in progress. Prior to the 1994 elections, Gingrich provoked great thought that included a vivid agenda (called the Contract With America) detailing how Republicans would govern. The Republicans could easily have come up with the "Health Care Contract for America."

If the GOP alternative had picked up support in the polls, President Obama might have called them into the Oval Office. They could have negotiated and maybe devised a plan that could have won wide support.

Instead, we find the party of no. No votes for reform. No to ideas. No, No, NO! That won't win many elections.

After the Senate Finance Committee vote on Tuesday, Republicans like Iowa Sen. Chuck Grassley pretty much cut themselves out of any further negotiations, though Sen. Snowe will probably have some say.

As for President Obama, there is disappointment with him, too. I covered probably 20 Obama campaign events in Indiana in 2008 and I heard him say over and over and over how he would reach out to Republicans and that they would have seats at the table. He said at Grant Park on Election Night how much he needed them. Specifi-



Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich

cally, Obama said, "There are many who won't agree with every decision or policy I make as President, and we know that government can't solve every problem. But I will always be honest with you about the challenges we face. I will listen to you, especially when we disagree. And above all, I will ask you to join in the work of remaking this nation the only way it's been done in America for two-hundred and twenty-one years - block by block, brick by brick, calloused hand by calloused hand."

To listen to Hoosier Republicans, the door to the Oval Office has been slammed shut. When I asked Sen. Lugar last summer what kind of dialogue he's had with President Obama, he said none. The irony there is that Obama used TV ads that included Lugar (on nuclear threat reduction)

and he cited him in key speeches, like his campaign kickoff in Springfield. So if health care ultimately fails, you could pin some of the blame on the new president for not following his own rhetoric.

I've spent a lot of time with Republicans running for Congress over the last several weeks. To a man, they will tell you that the status quo is unacceptable. When it comes to the political consequences, they smile and indicate they expect a bountiful political harvest if the reforms pass. When I run the "Republican Alternative" scenario I just described, they nod in agreement and wish it had happened.

Here's what I think is going to happen. There won't be a public option, because the President will lose Snowe and maybe Senate moderates like Evan Bayh. The public option is the element most likely to fire up even more vividly the Tea Party movement, which right now is lashing out at all things incumbent and has the potential to grow in the vacuum of failure.

Democrats, meanwhile, are likely to talk about a plan that removes pre-existing conditions, capping what a family would have to pay out in a health catastrophe. A plan that would reduce the deficit, include up to 25 to 30 million people, and help small businesses cap their skyrocketing health care costs.

If Republican virtues like allowing insurance to be sold across state lines or tort reforms get in (though there will be no Republicans at the table now to push those things), the bill could be even better.

There's a long way to go on this, but the political calculations have been ... breathtaking. ❖



Messer to report \$127K; Murphy \$103K; while Burton raised \$164K

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - At a key milepost in the crowded 5th CD race, former legislator Luke Messer appears to have the lead among the four challengers, reporting \$127,000 raised in the third quarter with more than \$240,000 cash on hand. Messer's six-month total is \$330,000. State Rep. Mike Murphy will report around \$103,000 raised for the third quarter, according to John Hammond IV.

Another challenger, Brose McVey, told Howey Politics Indiana that he would post "around \$50,000" on his third quarter FEC filing due today, bringing his race total to \$150,000. State Rep. Mike Murphy was still working on his report at HPI's press time. The fourth challenger, 2008 Republican nominee Dr. John McGoff, could not be reached for comment. McGoff spent much of August on National Guard duty in Afghanistan.

U.S. Rep. Dan Burton raised \$164,881.87 in the third quarter, according to his spokesman John Donnelly. "His cash on hand number will be good," said Howard County Republican Chairman Craig Dunn. "He has not held a fundraiser of any import in the last two months. He is focusing on being a Congressman." Burton recently picked up the endorsement of Kokomo Councilman Mike Karickhoff, who is also running against State Rep. Ron Herrell, D-Kokomo.

Messer told HPI on Wednesday, "We are on a pace to build a credible campaign to take on an incumbent congressman. People are waiting for the next generation of conservative Republican leaders to emerge."

The Messer campaign also confirmed an "anonymous" Advance Indiana blog report that the candidate was arrested on a DUI charge in 1995. "He did get an DUI 15 years ago," said campaign consultant Jennifer Hollowell. "Luke knows it was a mistake, he regrets it, and he learned an important lesson."

Messer had nearly 700 individual contributors, Hollowell said. "We now have a pattern. Over 90 percent of contributors and contributions come from Indiana. Over 70 percent of contributors and contributions come from counties that make up the 5th District. It's clear that Luke Messer is the only candidate who can defeat Dan Burton. From Facebook friends to endorsements from dozens of

elected officials and hundreds of Hoosiers, Messer has built a grassroots campaign that also has financial strength. Now is the time for Republican activists to decide if they are serious about changing Republican leadership in the 5th Congressional District."

Hollowell said that with the next FEC numbers not due until late January, and a traditionally slow 4th quarter fundraising dynamic coming in the next three months, the time is closing for Republicans to decide on a principal challenger to Rep. Burton.

While McVey doesn't have a money advantage, he has worked on what he calls a "grassroots campaign" that includes endorsements from State Sen. Beverly Gard, State Sen. Brent Waltz, former Hancock Sheriff and legislator Nick Gulling, Noblesville Council President Greg O'Connor, Huntington County Council President John Hacker and Huntington businesswoman Marj Hiner. Last week McVey announced the support of Wabash County Commissioners Barry Eppley and Scott Givens and County Councilmen Randy Curless, Daryl Evans, Ted Little and Gary Nose.



U.S. Rep. Dan Burton will still maintain a money lead over his closest challenger after reporting \$164,881 in the third quarter.

Barry Eppley and Scott Givens and County Councilmen Randy Curless, Daryl Evans, Ted Little and Gary Nose.

"Brose McVey's background in small business, his service and training in agriculture, and his work to help Hoosier companies is exactly the sort of proactive leadership we need to represent us in Congress," Sen. Gard said in September.

In Hamilton County, McVey has been endorsed by County Councilmen Meredith Carter and John Hiatt, Hamilton Assessor Debbie Folkerts, Treasurer Kim Good, Recorder Jennifer Hayden, Auditor Dawn Coverdale, and

Surveyor Kent Ward.

"We'll have over 650 individual donors," McVey said, adding that he initially thought that trying to compete with Burton in Howard and Grant counties would be a "fool's errand." But, McVey said, a number of business leaders in those counties have signed on to the campaign.

McVey has questioned whether a traditional TV media campaign will work in the sprawling 5th CD, which includes the Indianapolis, Fort Wayne and South Bend



media markets. "I think this is more of a cable, radio and direct mail kind of race," he said.

Rep. Murphy has been focusing his campaign on his experience, which he is contrasting with Rep. Burton's. "When Henry Hyde retired, Dan Burton was in line to become chair of the House Foreign Relations Committee," Murphy said. "Lo and behold, they didn't give him the job. I remember calling and asking, 'What is going on?' and the answer I got was 'You guys don't get it out there. This guy is not respected by his own caucus.'"

Murphy is casting himself as the only candidate in the field who has exhibited leadership. His role in writing the 2006 Telecommunications Act has resulted in \$1.5 billion in investment in the state, created 2,500 new jobs and preserved between 4,000 and 6,000 existing jobs. He said he is "the only guy to get rid of a tax." Murphy said he worked to get rid of the inheritance tax, and ended up with legislation that exempted Hoosiers with estates of \$100,000 or less. "Dan Burton can't match that," Murphy said. He added that he is the only candidate to write and pass an amendment (Article 5, Section 10 in the Indiana Constitution in case a truck bomb rolling through the porous west basement entrance of the Statehouse were to wipe out the leadership). Murphy said he wrote energy legislation that created the Clean Coal Technology Research Center at Purdue. And, he said, he's the only candidate to write legislation "protecting women." He referenced the bill that makes killing a woman with a fetus a condition to revoke bail, as well as a 6- to 20-year sentence enhancement. He noted that both Planned Parenthood and Right to Life endorsed that bill.

"I've accomplished most of this as a member of the minority," Murphy said. "I keep my Republican principles and yet work across the aisle. I'm a problem solver." In contrast, Murphy said he can find no similar legislation written by Burton since he was elected to Congress in 1982.

Murphy, who helped write positions for Lt. Gov. John Mutz' 1988 gubernatorial campaign, lists former aides to Gov. Mitch Daniels Neil Pickett and Paul Mitchell, former Anthem executive Mike Smith, former St. Francis Medical Center CEO Bob Brody and former Eli Lilly executive David Lewis as helping him write positions on agriculture and health care that are posted on his website.

Murphy told HPI he doesn't expect the field to consolidate. "At this point I

expect everyone will be in the race" through the May 2010 primary, Murphy said. He also disputed the notion that a crowded challenger field would likely result in a Burton victory. He pointed to Chris Matthews of Bellwether Research, the same firm employed by Gov. Daniels. In a survey conducted for him last February, Murphy said that Burton's re-elect was at 35 percent. "Lee Atwater used to say that if you were at 40 percent you were a dead man," Murphy said. The polling shows that Murphy has 77 percent name ID in Hamilton and Marion counties, which makes up 55 percent of the 5th CD. "I already represent 10 percent of the district and there I have 90 percent name ID and 73 percent approval."

3RD CD

As Howey Politics Indiana reported in its Oct. 8 edi-

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tion, State Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-Jimtown, filed her committee to challenge U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly. "I am filing for my exploratory committee today because it is increasingly difficult to stand by and watch Washington move down a path that the majority of voters don't agree with. The frustration in the 2nd congressional district is palpable," Walorski said.

Walorski has been active in the political process, serving as a state legislator since 2004. She has quickly become a leader in the Statehouse and is currently serving as assistant Republican floor leader. She served on the Public Policy Committee and as vice-chair to the Family, Children & Human Affairs Committee in the 2006 session. Her work has included legislation ranging from the Voter ID law, the lifetime handgun permit and identity theft measures. She says that she has helped balance state budgets, cut government bureaucracy and reduced taxes.

Walorski has already begun making rounds within the 12 counties that comprise the 2nd district. "I have been and will continue to travel the district and listen to what is on the minds of the voters and what type of leadership they are looking for in Washington," she said. "What I have been hearing is frustration with a Pelosi-driven agenda, the 'politics as usual' attitude, and disregard for job creation."

St. Joseph County Democratic Chairman Butch Morgan told HPI, "It's not a surprise. She's been wanting to do this and now is her big chance. I think Donnelly will run a very strong campaign. The good news is he's well liked by Democrats and Republicans throughout the district. Her name has not been out in front of 70 to 80 percent of the voters. She's a Glenn Beck fan, kind of an extremist. She'll run a very aggressive and an extremist kind of campaign and that's what we'll prepare for. But they will not outwork Joe Donnelly. He's traveled to every county on a very regular basis. His staff does a very good job of constituent service. Joe is a very regular guy. He's a moderate that suits the district and suits the times."

Could public opinion of President Obama at mid-term, pose a problem for Donnelly, similar to what Republican Rep. John Hiler faced in 1982 during President Reagan's first mid-term? "There's a lot of variables out there right now with health care, the economy and things like that," Morgan said. "We'll have to see what the climate is like. The best thing going for us is that people are very familiar with the kind of representation they're getting. No matter what the climate is, people are going to take a look at Joe Donnelly for what Joe Donnelly has done."

7TH CD

Butler University Prof. Marvin Scott has announced he will challenge U.S. Rep. Andre Carson. Scott has run unsuccessfully twice in the 7th CD, losing to the late Rep. Julia Carson.

8TH CD

Republican Dr. Larry Buschon entered the 8th CD race, challenging U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth, D-Evansville, on Monday. "We stand at a historic moment in this country. How we respond could determine whether the United States retains its place in the world as a beacon of freedom and hope, or whether we slip into an abyss of debt and socialism," said Buschon, a cardiologist. "I worry about the



DR. BUSCHON

path we are headed down under one party rule and I don't believe the agenda of Democrat leadership is in tune with Indiana's 8th congressional district. Our congressman is facilitating the agenda of that one party rule. He campaigns on a conservative platform, but doesn't back it up with his votes."

Buschon is the third candidate with a medical background to enter an Indiana congressional race for the 2010 cycle. Dr. Thomas Hayhurst will challenge Republican U.S. Rep. Mark Souder in the 3rd CD, and Dr. John McGoff is seeking a second nomination in the 5th CD where he unsuccessfully challenged U.S. Rep. Dan Burton in 2008.

On the health reforms that are about to come up for a vote in the Senate Finance Committee, Buschon said, "Let me dispel a myth: Doctors want health care reform. Healthcare is in need of reforms. Too many people cannot afford basic insurance. Too many have the fear of not knowing what would happen if they or a loved one falls seriously ill. But let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater. I have personally cared for people teetering on the edge of life and death. Fortunately, the great joy of my profession is helping people regain their health. Every day I see people recover from poor health and have a second chance at life. And you know what? Bureaucrats in Washington didn't make it happen. Caring families and compassionate healthcare providers did. I will work to restore the direct link between doctors and their patients."

Ellsworth, a former Vanderburgh County sheriff, was elected to Congress in 2006, easily defeating U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. A member of the House Blue Dogs, Ellsworth is undecided on the health care reforms, though he said after President Obama's speech to a joint session of Congress in September that it is time to act on the reforms. In 2008, Ellsworth easily defeated Republican Greg Goode. Eighth CD Republicans quickly rallied around the



Buschon candidacy. "Larry Buschon is the type of principled conservative we need to return us to our core values of balanced budgets, lower taxes and limited federal government," said Warrick County Republican Chairman Rick Martin. "His knowledge of the issues that we face today, particularly the issue of health care reform, makes him an ideal candidate to represent the voters of the 8th District in Congress."

"I am elated to see Larry Buschon enter the race for Congress. He is principled and incredibly intelligent, but not afraid to listen and learn. He will make a tremendous Congressman and represent our district well," said Vanderburgh County Republican Chairman Nicholas Hermann.

Buschon has spent his career specializing in cardiothoracic surgery and has performed hundreds of heart surgeries. Since 2003, he has served as President of Ohio Valley HeartCare, the tri-state region's most comprehensive cardiology and cardiovascular surgery practice. Larry's outstanding work and leadership in this field led to him being honored as the St. Mary's Medical Staff Physician of the year in 2007.

9TH CD

The campaign of Todd Young for Congress announced today that it shattered the record for cumulative fundraising by a challenging Republican vying for the 9th District congressional seat. In the third quarter, the campaign earned over \$125,000, bringing its cash-on-hand total to \$200,000.

U.S. Rep. Baron Hill will report around \$170,000 raised in the third quarter and will post around \$540,000 cash on hand, sources have told HPI.

"I am humbled to lead this effort to make the Ninth our district again," said Young, R-Bloomington. "The generosity of people hungry for a responsive, accountable government is exciting, and I'm grateful to the many Hoosiers who helped us break an incredible fundraising record. We've taken our message of a smaller government that lives within its financial means across the district in town hall meetings, pancake breakfasts, and other community events, and people have a real appetite for change. People are more fed up than ever with the same-old, same-old in Washington. They're tired of politicians only out for themselves. They want someone to represent them, not govern them."

Helping Young celebrate the strong fundraising showing was Vice president Dan Quayle, the guest of honor at a Bloomington event Wednesday evening. Quayle accompanied Young on a tour of BioConvergence LLC, a small business serving the biotech and pharmaceutical industries. "The Vice President knows the importance of returning Hoosier values to Washington in the form of a responsive government that actually listens to its people and acts ac-

cordingly," Young said. "I'm proud Mr. Quayle has lent his support to our effort to bring real fiscal responsibility and leadership to Washington."

HD45

Jesse James will take on Elvis. James filed to run in HD45 against State Rep. Bruce Borders, the only Elvis Presley impersonator in the Indiana General Assembly. James is a Wabash College graduate now attending the Indiana University Maurer School of Law, Bloomington. He interned with the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission. Kristen Self of the House Democrats, told HPI "This district is within our reach." Jill Long Thompson won there in 2008. Borders defeated Democrat Richard Marshall 12,700 to 11,608 in 2008. In 2006, Borders won with 11,719 to 8,354 over Democrat Michael Bledsoe.

HD77

Former Vanderburgh County and Indiana Department of Local Government Finance Commissioner Cheryl Musgrave formally announced her candidacy on Wednesday for HD77 and the seat held by freshman Democrat Rep. Gail Riecken, D-Evansville.

Speaking to a group of friends, family and supporters in Goosetown Park, a park she helped expand as a Neighborhood Association president, Musgrave said state government must be focused on three key issues: "good jobs, fair taxation and great education."

"All of our attention must be focused on job creation, whether it is through building the roads we need, like I-69, or through fair taxation that delivers the government services that we need without draining our wallets," said Musgrave. "Our education must be great and receive the funding it deserves."

Musgrave also noted that partisan concerns too often distract legislators from focusing on those issues. "The last legislative session showed that partisan fighting is still preferred over hard choices," said Musgrave. "We don't have time for this. We need skilled political leadership with a proven record of accomplishment ready to act and forge new solutions."

She pointed to her experience in numerous civic leadership positions as proof of her ability to focus on the problems facing Southwest Indiana. In closing, she said, "During my time as county assessor, as county commissioner, as a commissioner in Indianapolis, and, yes, even my time as neighborhood association president worrying about the size of our parks, I have shown that I have the experience, the energy, and the creativity to put the old way of doing things behind us, to look for real solutions to real problems, and to do what needs to be done."❖



Nobel stamp overrides Obama's detractors

By **DAVE KITCHELL**

LOGANSPORT - It's somewhat ironic for an American president.

Just a week after suffering his worst setback on the world stage, he was presented with his greatest triumph.

Losing the Olympics is one thing, but winning a Nobel is quite another. Obama can't take all the blame for



Rio de Janeiro's successful bid for the 2016 games. But he can take the award for promoting peace in our time all by himself.

To say that what may be the world's most prominent honor is not due him yet is to say that he's won one faster than any American president – faster than few people in any capacity.

But the Nobel stamp approval says something more about Obama and the rest of the world:

Somebody has to be a peacemaker, even if the people in every majority of every country in the world want to worry about their own problems and not anyone else's.

Obama deserves the award in no small way because he listened to an Indiana Republican named Richard Lugar. He came to know and respect Lugar for his foreign policy positions, particularly with regard to nuclear disarmament. A trip to a nuclear plant with Lugar to monitor disarmament was very understated, much like Lugar's career.

What is more important is that Obama has not been afraid to take on the toughest nuts to crack in foreign policy. He is unafraid to stand up to Iran and to meet with its controversial leader. He is unafraid to talk to Cuba about normalizing relations with a Communist country. After all, we have more normal relations with the largest Communist country in the world, China, than we have with many other countries, and we trade more with China than most other nations.

Obama is unafraid to appoint an openly gay ambassador, which, by the way, has been done before. He is unafraid to travel outside the country and to speak in places where an American president has never been, reaching out to the Muslim world. He is unafraid to use Air Force One to bring his own mountain to the Mohammads of the world. White House records indicate he has already traveled outside the United States more than any other president in his first year in office. That's hitting the ground

running, even if it means leaving the ground, flying.

Americans take so much for granted, including the fact that we're really at peace with the world, even if we started our own war without the blessing of the United Nations. Much of the world does not enjoy the peace we have, which explains why millions clicked on You Tube to see the only known footage ever shot of Anne Frank before she was murdered by the Nazis. More than a half century after a young girl's death and a teen's diary that remains one of the world's best-sellers, people throughout the world have an appreciation and respect for the martyrdom she represents and a Holocaust some deny with the greatest of naivete.

It's going to be hard for Obama to top the Nobel Peace Prize, but for the moment, it is significant to say that it is the world's way of saying, "You're on the right track, keep going. We don't care about your health insurance, and in the big picture, you're accomplishing some amazing things that someone has to do, but no one else has." And so, health care detractors, accusing Obama of becoming the next Hitler or promoting death panels the way the

Nazis really did should take a step back and think again.

Hitler and Obama have one thing in common. They have both been Time magazine's Man of the Year. But that's where the similarity ends.

If anything, the world has said to Obama, "We like the fact that you don't want to go it alone and you appreciate that we're all in this together."

Of course the timing of the award is a

bit perilous for Obama. With Afghanistan's future hanging in the balance, he must decide whether to stay or go, try a surge or purge his troops. The status quo is not enough. Nobel, the namesake for the prizes he founded, was the inventor of dynamite. His prize celebrates peace, but today, it is the political dynamite that trumps detractors who claim an American president hasn't accomplished anything. ❖



Dave Kitchell is a veteran Indiana political columnist.



The media are biased?

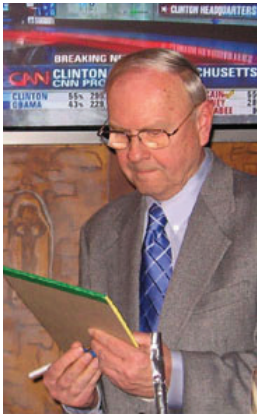
By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - Here is a statement oft heard: "The media is biased."

Agree?

Well, there's something wrong with that statement. Actually three things.

First, the word "media" is plural. It should be "media are."



Second, "media" has come to mean so much, even if defined as "news media," that it means almost nothing. The term has come to encompass everything from supermarket tabloids to the Chicago Tribune, from blog postings by a guy in his underwear in his basement to a report by a TV network news correspondent at a battle scene in Afghanistan, from a funny David Letterman top 10 list to a serious Lehrer NewsHour analysis, from hate spielers on radio to love advisers on cable TV, from Saturday Night Live to Sunday morning's

Meet the Press.

Third, if the bias charge is leveled in general at all professional news operations, it's just plain wrong.

But a recent Pew Research Center survey found that 60 percent of Americans view news organizations as being politically biased. Only 26 percent thought news organizations are careful to avoid bias.

Now, we don't know just what organizations the respondents had in mind in this evaluation. Presumably they weren't thinking of the underwear guy making up stuff in his basement. But they probably were thinking of the whole spectrum of news and commentary. And bias is in the eye of the beholder.

The survey found that Fox News was viewed favorably by only 43 percent of Democrats but by 72 percent of Republicans. And CNN was viewed favorably by only 44 percent of Republicans but by 75 percent of Democrats.

MSNBC, where commentators exchange insults back and forth with Fox News commentators, was viewed unfavorably by 35 percent of Republicans, 9 percent of Democrats.

Indeed, if some of the featured cable TV performers are the ones to be evaluated, or if we are thinking of late night TV comedians or mid-day squawk radio entrepreneurs, than 100 percent of respondents should have found political bias. They are, of course, expressing political opinions in the quest for ratings, not seeking to present

objective news that viewers might tune out as too dull.

There's nothing wrong, by the way, with commentary, as long as it doesn't intentionally spread misinformation that the presenter knows to be untrue.

Nor is there anything wrong with listening to a commentator with whom you agree, perhaps to laugh along with barbs at the other side or maybe to reinforce your views that your side is obviously right.

There also should be some time for the actual news of the day. If Americans won't let facts get in the way of what they want the news to be, democracy is in big trouble and any hope of ending fierce, divisive partisanship vanishes.

The Pew survey did have some good news for the traditional sources of news. Large majorities continued to rate them favorably - local TV news at 73 percent, the daily newspaper with which the respondents were most familiar at 65 percent and network TV news at 64 percent.

So there is a place for news operations that still have journalists schooled by the editors and news directors who want everything checked out, more than single sources obtained and keeping any personal biases out of reporting.

There still is the old-school admonition: "If your mother says she loves you, check it out." This differs from the approach: "If the source says something outrageous, quick, get it on the air."

With all of the cutbacks, traditional sources of news may not be able to do all of the past checking: the checking on facts and the checking on government, the watchdog function.

A perception of bias, however, enters into evaluation of the watchdog.

A survey back in November 2005, when George W. Bush was president, found that two-thirds of Democrats and just a quarter of Republicans viewed news coverage of the administration as fair. Now, in the latest Pew survey, three-fourths of Republicans but only just over half of Democrats find coverage of the Obama administration to be fair.

At whom the dog barks seems to define "fairness" for many Americans.

Bias? Sometimes it's there, but not everywhere, in "the media." ❖

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



Matt Tully, Indianapolis Star: Gov. Mitch Daniels is not running for president. Nope. Not gonna happen. No way, no how, no chance. Not this guy. That's what he says, anyway. But today, let's talk more about actions than words. By that measure, it sure seems like Daniels is running for something. Or maybe he just likes jumping into national energy and health-care debates. Maybe he simply enjoys writing sweeping speeches and op-eds about challenges facing the country. Maybe his snipes at President Barack Obama are nothing more than the musings of a Hoosier governor wrapping up his political career. Maybe he likes being heard by a broader audience. Maybe. But with each passing week, it seems Daniels is playing the role of presidential wannabe. He tells everyone the same thing: I'm not running for the White House. But as right-leaning blogs and national media types increasingly point to him as candidate material, he continues taking steps that encourage that. There's nothing wrong with a governor speaking out on national issues. Everything Washington does affects Indiana. But Daniels is speaking out more than ever before. So what does it all mean? Hard to say. For now, Mitch Daniels is not a presidential candidate. He's just playing one on TV. ❖

Sylvia Smith, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette: No matter how distasteful you find Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his country's nuclear ambitions, you ought to hope he sees himself as the leader of a country. In fact, we all ought to hope that what Ahmadinejad and the other Iranian leaders want to do is get the best deal they can to protect their country's national security, economic and geographic interests. The alternative is scary. As Sen. Evan Bayh put it rather elegantly last week, what the U.S. – and the rest of the world – must do is assess the character of the Iranian regime. He posed this essential question: "Ultimately, will they act as a nation-state, or are they motivated by religious fervor or hatred of the U.S. and the West?" The regime Bayh was referring to, of course, goes beyond Ahmadinejad because Ayatollah Ali Khomeini is certainly a potent force in the Islamic republic. And perhaps there are other power centers as well, or perhaps the power is fluid in a way that it isn't in the U.S. Nevertheless, if the Iranian power elite see themselves as the leaders of a country, certain concerns rise in importance: whether Iranians live decently, can get jobs, have access to economic resources and aren't so miserable that they take it out on the men in power. The right of a sovereign country to have nuclear power, nuclear medicine and – even – a nuclear weapon is still important for leaders of a nation-state. But that is just part of an overall mix of concerns. For that regime, the kind of economic sanctions the West is

contemplating to force Iran to confine its nuclear program to benign uses might be effective. But if Ahmadinejad, et al., are motivated by a hatred of the West, particularly the U.S. and Israel, an appeal to their pragmatic side – which is what sanctions are all about – would be useless. In fact, sanctions would be worse than useless; they would be inflammatory. ❖



Rich James, Post-Tribune: If you drive to the highest point of the Cline Avenue extension and look to the north on a clear day, you'll be able to envision what could have been. You'll be looking at the heart of what would have been the 2016 Olympic Games. But, woulda, coulda, shoulda doesn't get it. Yet, Chicago wasn't the biggest loser last Friday when the Olympic Games were given to Rio de Janeiro. No, Mayor Richard Daley wasn't the biggest loser either. Neither Chicago nor its politicians, nor even Oprah, was the biggest loser. No, look around. The biggest loser is right here. That's you and your neighbors. There was so much potential for Northwest Indiana. As an old congressional aide once said, "We could have been in the tall cotton." The Olympics would have provided the jump-start this area hasn't had since the steel mills arrived 100 years ago. The Games would have given the area a good kick in the pants. It could have been the defining moment when the area was told to stand up for itself and look to the future, not cower in the face of political threats. ❖

Gary Gerard, Warsaw Times-Union: I really wish I could have faith in our government. You know, feel good about it. Feel like they were doing the right thing for the people of America. But no. A couple things I stumbled across this week just really illustrate how messed up things truly are in Washington. The first thing is kind of under the radar, but I was perusing the Scripps Howard News Service the other day and I came across a release from the American Small Business League. Seems there is an arm of the government called the Federal Procurement Data System - Next Generation. What it does is track government contracts. Basically, it watches which companies are getting our tax dollars. The ASBL, as a big advocate of small business, thinks small businesses are the true incubators of jobs. Just last week, the U.S. Department of Labor announced that unemployment hit 9.8 percent. But the ASBL notes that if you include frustrated workers who have dropped off unemployment rolls, taken part-time work, the rate could be as high as 17 percent. So ASBL thinks the government should be sending contracts to small businesses to help create jobs. Makes sense. Well, apparently not to the government, which continues to award billions of dollars in small-business contracts to giant corporations which are more likely to outsource or send jobs overseas. ❖



Rokita defends use of TV ads

INDIANAPOLIS - Secretary of State Todd Rokita has just 14 months left in his term, but that isn't stopping him from being active (Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). In recent weeks, he has spent more than \$100,000 to launch a redistricting-overhaul effort and has embarked on a new investment scam-awareness campaign costing \$1.5 million through next year. The latter effort features TV commercials with Rokita that are playing liberally around the state. Some bloggers and politicians question whether Rokita is increasing his name recognition for a possible run for higher office, such as governor in 2012. "People think we just started this stuff. We've been doing this every year," Rokita said. "I might only have 14 months left, but I promised my staff and family that I won't go out politely." So far this year, he has spent \$543,000 on his investment watch effort that focuses on helping Hoosiers spot a con artist. That will continue in 2010 for a total of \$1.5 million. Most of the money comes from an enforcement fund – not general state tax dollars. The enforcement fund is financed by fines and penalties. As for his future, he is coy about running for governor or any other office. "There's a lot going on in the Rokita household," he said, noting he and his wife are expecting their second son and that he will be 40 when he leaves office, with a family to feed. Finally, though, he concedes he would consider elected office in the future. "If we thought we could add value to the state, if it makes sense for us, if people want us to run, absolutely it would be an honor to consider that," Rokita said.



3 caucuses will fill Curley's jobs

CROWN POINT - Lake County Republican activists will host three party caucuses in the coming week to fill the vacancies left by the passing of John Curley (Times of Northwest Indiana). He held three party and public offices when he died Tuesday: Lake County GOP chairman, First Congressional District GOP chairman and Winfield Township trustee/assessor. Trevor Foughty, spokesman for the Indiana Republican Party, said Wednesday that Kim Krull, who was elected county vice chairwoman earlier this year, becomes the acting county chairwoman. He said the state GOP is encouraging the county organization to host a caucus of all of the county's hundreds of precinct committeemen and vice committeemen within 30 days to elect a new party leader. Krull said Wednesday she will schedule the election once she receives official notice of the vacancy from the county clerk's office. Foughty said the new county chairman and vice chairman then would attend a caucus of party leaders within the state's First Congressional District to elect a district chairman. Nicholas Gasparovic, Lake County elections board assistant director, said Wednesday the Republican Winfield Township precinct committee members also must meet within 30 days to select a new trustee/assessor. Burns Funeral Home and Crematory in Merrillville announced Wednesday that Curley's family will have a private memorial service for close friends and family.

Skillman seeks cards for troops

INDIANAPOLIS - Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman is urging Indiana residents to write letters and send cards to troops during the upcoming holiday season (Associated Press). Skillman says the mail campaign called "Hoosier Cheer For Our Heroes" is a chance for

people to send their thoughts, prayers and thanks to Indiana servicemen and women who will be spending the holidays away from their homes and families. Skillman's office received about 20,000 cards for troops last year, and officials hope to top that this year. Skillman's office is collecting cards and will send them to Indiana troops around the world. Those who want to participate should send cards and letters, but not money or gifts, to Skillman's Statehouse office by Nov. 18.

Consolidation drive falls short of goal

EVANSVILLE - Today is their self-imposed deadline for collecting 2,632 signatures to get Evansville-Vanderburgh County government consolidation on the 2010 ballot — but advocates are just a third of the way there (Evansville Courier & Press). The League of Women Voters of Southwestern Indiana, which aims to trigger a complex statutory process for a referendum on consolidation, submitted its first batch of signatures to the Vanderburgh County Voter Registration Office on Tuesday. The Voter Registration Office reported Wednesday that 926 of the 1,060 signatures were verified.

Wargo to seek Elkhart sheriff

ELKHART - Bill Wargo formally announced his candidacy Wednesday in the 2010 election for Elkhart County Sheriff (Elkhart Truth). Wargo, currently the chief investigator of the Elkhart County prosecutor's office, made the announcement in front of 438 Goshen Ave., the site of a meth lab discovered in April, Wargo said. Wargo said drug enforcement will be a focal point during his campaign.